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# A HISTORY OF THE MACEDONIAN PEOPLE



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## NATURAL AND GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF MACEDONIA

Macedonia extends over a part of the Balkan Peninsula, bordered to the north by the mountains of Shar, Skopska Tsrna Gora, Kozyak, Osogovo and Rila, to the east by the western parts of the Rhodopes and the River Mesta, to the south by the Aegean Sea and the River Bistritsa and to the west by the mountains of Korab, Yablanitsa, Mokra and Pindus. Its total area is one of 67,741.2 sq. kms., of which 25,411 sq. kms., that is to say 37.51%, constitute the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, while the rest lies within the frontiers of Greece and the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

Its favourable geographical position, with a wide exit to the Aegean Sea and the concurrence of important international routes, enabled Macedonia early on to come under the influence of the developed Mediterranean while, at the same time, making possible the consequences that followed upon various conquering invasions.

The relief structure of Macedonia is a characteristic one in which large and high mountain massifs give way to extensive, flat valleys and plains. The valleys are interconnected by low passes or deep ravines (such as those of Derven, Taor, Veles, Demir Kapiya and Tsiganska Klisura on the River Vardar, and Kresnen and Rupil on the River Struma). Some of the valleys are occupied by lakes as, for example, Ohrid, Prespa, Doyran, Beshik and Lagadin.

Macedonia is rich in certain extremely important minerals. The Kratovo-Zletovo massif contains lead and zinc ores, which are also to be found on the Chalcydicean Peninsula. The Kichevo and Demir Hisar basin contains iron ore. On the Baba Sach mountain, near Kichevo, lime is to be found together with manganese ore, while in the district of Mariovo and Meglen antimony and arsenic ores are to be found. There are also deposits of non-metals, such as talc, magnesite, asbestos, mica, diatomaceous soil, calcareous mud-stones, quartz gravel, quartzite and silex. The rocks themselves that go to make up the relief structure of Macedonia contain large quantities of granite, basalt, travertine and marble.

Virtually the entire territory of Macedonia lies between latitudes 40° and 42° North and is a transitional region between the me-

diterranean and continental climate. The summers are hot and dry, a fact that is reflected in the vegetation, which is that of hot areas without much moisture. The rainfall is low, most of the rain falling in the western regions (about 700 mms.) and the least in Tikvesh in the central Vardar section (only 450 mms.). The dispersion of the rainfall is extremely unfavourable so that a lack of moisture is reflected in the vegetation.

Agricultural crops characteristic of continental regions (wheat, maize, potatoes and central European fruits) are grown, as are also certain mediterranean cultures, such as cotton and opium poppies. The variety of agricultural produce is conditioned not only by the climate but also by the nature of the soil, which represents a true mosaic of types and sub-types. A similar variety is to be found in the vegetation – from olives, a distinctly mediterranean culture, in the far south, through deciduous trees such as oak, chestnut and beech to conifers, which are limited mostly to the high ranges of the Rhodopes and Pelister and are rare in other parts. Pasture-lands occur both in the lowlands and from an altitude of 1,600 metres above sea level. Marsh vegetation exists in the marshy areas and the lower river courses are characterized by lowland vegetation.

## MACEDONIA IN THE ERA OF PRIMAЕVAL SOCIETY AND THE SLAVE-OWNING SYSTEM

### PRIMITIVE SOCIETY

#### *Neolithic*

Already in the early stages of pre-history Macedonia occupied a place of particular significance in the development of the ancient Balkans and in the linking of two great cultural spheres – the Aegean-Anatolian, the focal point of earliest agriculture, and the Internal Balkan and Central European. Its pre-historic development was in large measure determined by its position on important natural communication routes in the ancient Balkans and the relative natural isolation of certain parts which gave rise to specific characteristics in its cultural growth.

The oldest traces of human life in Macedonia springs from the older Neolithic Period, the period of primitive agriculture with the beginnings of animal husbandry, permanent settlement in one place and the development of domestic crafts, in particular of pottery. This was, in fact, the period when primitive society passed from the earliest phase of its development, that of savagery, into a new and more developed phase, barbarianism. In Eastern Macedonia and the Vardar region this phase is associated with the findings from Vrshnik, near Tarintsi (Shtip), known as the Vrshnik group, which belong to a wider cultural complex from the Neolithic Period, that of the Eastern Balkans. Four phases of development in the Neolithic evolution which point to a long-lasting settlement can be seen in this group. The basic branch of the economy was agriculture. Polished stone axes, most of them flattened or trapezoid in form, were used as implements. The Vrshnik group is closely connected historically to Thrace and also to various cultural groups in Anatolia. Certain types of wheat which have been discovered here come from Anatolia while the sling as a weapon is typical of the Aegean and North – eastern regions. The appearance of grey, monochrome three-legged vessels in the second and third phases of the Vrshnik group can be explained by the transition to a

higher cultural and economic level with the spread of agriculture and accompanying acquisitions from the material culture of the Anatolian and Thracian regions. This spread could have been effected by the migration of the population in search of new cultivable land, or again by the indigenous population from an earlier period, whose culture is as yet unknown in Macedonia and which had reached a lower level of economy, that of hunters and gatherers, being in contact with the first primitive agriculturalists and having taken over from them their agriculture and other acquisitions from their material culture and then handing them on to other neighbouring tribes.

The second wave which spread primitive agriculture from the East represents the beginning of the newer Neolithic Period. Coming from the South-east the new elements first made their appearance in Thrace, where they supplanted the culture of the older Neolithic Period, while towards the West, in Eastern Macedonia, that culture continued to live, in part parallel with the newer one, taking from it only certain elements. Even with the evolution up to that date the elements of the newer Neolithic Period gradually gained supremacy, a fact that can also be seen in the last phase of the Vršnik evolution.

Vršnik is so far the oldest known Neolithic site in Macedonia. It is still hard to speak of the older Neolithic Period in the other regions. The transition from the older to the newer Neolithic Period and the character of the newer Neolithic culture in the greater part of Macedonia are likewise unclear. Pelagonia is an exception, as is evidenced by the findings from Porodin. It would appear that in the Porodin group newer elements were superimposed on a basis still linked to the older Neolithic Period, while the influence of other areas south of Pelagonia is also felt.

### *The Bronze Age*

The Bronze Age in Macedonia is little known. It is certain that here cultural development followed a course considerably different from that of Central Europe and that it had greater similarity to the development of the Aegean and Anatolian regions. Therefore the whole Bronze Age is divided into early (up to 1900 B.C.), middle (1900-1500 B.C.) and late (1500-1200 B.C.). At least in those parts of Macedonia closer to Helladic and Anatolian culture, however, the Bronze Age began somewhat earlier and followed a course in part parallel to the transition from the Neolithic to the Metal Age. The clearest picture of the culture of the early Bronze Age is afforded by the findings in Pelagonia, which belong to the Armenokhori group (from the Armenokhori site in Aegean Mace-

donia). This group represents a stabilization of conditions in those areas already permanently settled by Indo-European groups and their symbiosis with the aboriginal population. In the later Bronze Age there came about an insufficiently known local evolution and the strengthening of trade connections with the South, with the Mycenaean world, which is characteristic of the Balkans.

### *Iron Age*

The Iron Age in Macedonia may be divided into several phases which differ from those in Central Europe since, in its cultural and historical development, Macedonia was, at that time, very closely linked to the Aegean world and to Greece so that, relatively speaking, it experienced its proto-historic period and its entry into history very early. This, as well as the specific features of its development, which was conditioned by the geomorphological character of the terrain and also by the unequal development of the different tribes on Macedonian territory, make it possible for the Iron Age in Macedonia to be divided into four basic phases. The first Iron Age, from about 1300 or 1200 B.C., corresponds historically to the great Aegean Migration. According to existing finds in Western Macedonia, certain of the tribes that took part in that migration originated from Macedonia. The old autochthonous population continued, however, to exist side by side with them.

The second Iron Age, a period of stabilization of the cultural and ethnic groups after the great Aegean Migration, in the time around and immediately after 700 B.C., is well known, thanks mainly to the findings in Eastern Macedonia and near Skopje. These indicate that in spite of local differences the culture of this period remained basically unified and spread to the Pelagonia region and to the Dardanians in Northern Macedonia, to the Paionians of the Central Vardar region and to the ancient city of Astibos in the valley of the River Bregalnitsa. In this period of stabilization, after the great migrations and renewed mingling of the population, there came about the formation of new tribes in these parts. It is also certain that the population of Macedonia at this time was related to the Illyrians, although east of the River Vardar the frontier towards the neighbouring and related Thracians was a very elastic one. Among the findings from Brazda, near Skopje, there are forms typical of the Thraco-Chymerian group from the Pannonian and Danube region which may in the main be linked to the appearance in those parts of certain equestrian tribes from the East (c. 700 B.C.).

The third Iron Age was a period of the strengthening of the tribal aristocracy, from the sixth to the fourth century B.C., when

certain significant changes occurred in the development of the material culture. These were conditioned by both the strengthening of tribal organisations and ever-increasing Greek influence, which was particularly in evidence in the rich export of luxury articles and ceramics. This period is best known from the necropolises in Pelagonia and in the Ohrid region (esp. Trebenishte). At Demir Kapiya, in spite of considerable Greek imports, there are certain elements from the local culture of the time.

The fourth Iron Age was a time of great Hellenistic influence when the transition of the greater part of Macedonian territory into the fully historical period took place. As yet comparatively little research into this period has been carried out. Elements from Celtic culture are virtually unknown in Macedonia although there is no doubt that the Celtic breakthrough to Delphi, 280-279 B.C., must have passed through it.

#### THE CREATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ANCIENT MACEDONIAN STATE

##### *The Creation of the State. Early History VII - VI century B.C.*

The early history of Macedonia is not well known. The ancient authors made a distinction between Upper and Lower Macedonia. In Upper Macedonia they included the district of Orestis, along the upper course of the River Chalijakmon (Bistritsa) and the basin of the Lake of Cheletron (Kostur); in the north of it lay Lyncaestida, along the middle course of the River Erigon (Tsrna), to the north-east was Pelagonia and to the south Elimeia, along the middle course of the River Chalijakmon; towards Epirus lay Tymphaea and Parauaei. Lower Macedonia contained Pieria, a narrow coastal belt along the Thermaic Gulf from the mouth of the River Peneus to the mouth of the Chalijakmon; Bottiaea, the central area between the Rivers Ludias and Axios (Moglenitsa and Vardar); a part of Paionia around the central section of the River Axios; Eordaia, a mountainous region around the Lake of Ostrovo; Almopia, a small but fertile district along the upper course of the River Ludias; Mygdonia, Crestonia and Bisaltia, districts above Chalcidice eastwards of the River Axios towards the River Strymon (Struma).

Various tribes settled on the territory of Macedonia. They mingled and crossed and assimilated. Class society and the class state appeared earliest in Lower Macedonia. The Lower Macedonia tribes came into contact with a population which, under the in-

fluence of the Greeks, was at a higher level of development. This led to a swifter stratification in their case, to a strengthening of the aristocracy and to a decline of their tribal relationships. Tribal organisation lasted longer in Upper Macedonia.

The formation of the Macedonian state was a long-drawn-out process which began in the seventh century B.C. with the descent of the Macedonian tribes from the north-west and western regions (Upper Macedonia) into the central parts of the plain of Lower Macedonia. The process continued with their penetration into the surrounding areas and ended somewhere towards the end of the sixth or the beginning of the fifth century B.C. Until that time these regions had been inhabited by Thracians and other tribes. These old inhabitants in part emigrated and in part were either killed or assimilated by their conquerors, becoming Macedonians. According to ancient tradition the founder of the first Macedonian state was King Perdiccas, who ruled during the first half of the seventh century B.C. (c. 707-645). Perdiccas' ancestors had come from Argos and his dynasty was called that of the Argeades. The area between the Rivers Ludias and Axios is considered to have been the nucleus of the ancient Macedonian state. Its various capitals, Ajga, Edessa (Voden) and Pella, were situated there.

After King Perdiccas tradition knows the names of five other rulers up to the end of the fourth century B.C. - Argeas, Philip, Aëropos, Alcétas and Amyntās. They were constantly at war with the neighbouring tribes. Argeas (c. 659-645) and Philip I (644-640) both received mention as being fighters against the Illyrians.

##### *Relations with Greece and Persia in the Fifth Century*

Although from the time of Darius' Scythian Campaign it had been under Persian rule, from the beginning of the fifth century, during the rule of Alexander I "Philhellene" (498-454), Macedonia was already actively participating in the political life of Greece. While Athens and Persia were engaged in war Alexander exploited the situation in order to take over new regions (Crestonia and Bisaltia) and the northern Macedonia tribes also recognized his supreme authority. The conquest of Thrace enabled Alexander to start making use of the wealth of ores to be found there. Coins bearing the names of the Thracian tribes ceased to be minted and a large number with Alexander's name on them began to appear.

After the Battle of Plateia (479 B.C.) Macedonia was freed from the Persian yoke. The son of Alexander's successor, Perdiccas II (454-413) implemented a frequently changing policy. At times he was close to Athen and at other times to Sparta, the two oppo-

sed but at the same time most eminent of the Greek city-states. Thus, after the founding of the Athens' colony of Amphipolis (437-435) at the mouth of the River Strymon, Perdiccas was active, agitating against Athens among the Thracian and Greek cities, which felt threatened by reason of the competition from this new city. Perdiccas prevented certain members of the Athenian Naval League from trading with or passing through his state.

In 429 B.C. Sitalces, the ruler of the powerful kingdom of the Odrysians, conducted a large-scale campaign against Macedonia. The campaign was undertaken at the request of Athens but Perdiccas succeeded in winning over Seut, Sitalces' heir, so that after thirty days of laying waste Sitalces left Macedonia. In 424 Perdiccas was in league with the famous Spartan military leader Brasidas, aiding him in taking cities in Thrace and Chalcidice, and later he used him in his attack on the Lyncaestes whom he intended to incorporate into his own state. At a later date he was once again in league with Athens. Thus Perdiccas knew how to make use of disagreements among his neighbours, who were expending their energies in wars against one another, while Macedonia became ever more powerful and was freed from the economic pressure of Athens.

At the time of Archelaus I (418-399) Macedonia began to pursue a more active foreign policy and at the same time its socio-economic development was speeded up. Archelaus instituted large number of reforms whose aim was to strengthen the central government and consolidate the state. He shifted his capital from Aegus to Pella which was closer to the sea and offered greater possibilities of economic development. He attracted well-known writers and artists like Euripides and Zeuxis to his luxurious court. From that time onwards Greek influence, which first affected the 'high' circles in Macedonia, was to become stronger. Archelaus maintained good-neighbourly relations with Athens and consolidated his influence in Thessaly, which had always been attractive to Macedonia, not only because of its fertile soil but also as a strategic and political platform of the Hellenistic world. Exploiting the existing class struggles and disagreements which were tearing this country apart, Archelaus took Larissa. Apart from this, like his predecessors, he waged wars against the Lyncaestae.

*Consolidation and Spread  
of the Macedonian State  
Philip II (359-336)*

The entire first half of the fourth century B.C. was full of internal disorders accompanied by attacks from outside. Royal po-

wer had become much weakened so that there were frequent changes of ruler. Amyntas II managed to remain in power for about two decades (c. 390-370) and to master the internal strife. At that time Macedonia was threatened by the Illyrians from the west, and by the Chalcidian League, with the city of Olynthus at its head, from the east. Amyntas formed an alliance with the then most powerful Greek city-state, Sparta, and with its help the Chalcidian League was destroyed.

At the time of Alexander II and Ptolemy Macedonia attempted to conquer Thessaly, which led to a conflict with Thebes from whom the Thessalians sought aid. The Theban army routed the Macedonians from Thessaly and they were obliged to supply hostages among whom was Philip, the future ruler of Macedonia.

From the middle of the fourth century B.C. Macedonia began to rise swiftly and, in the course of a few decades, had become one of the main forces in the Balkans and, after that, 'master of the world', as it was to be known by the ancient authors. Philip II (359-336) was to play a significant role in this process.

He carried out two significant reforms in the country, one military and one financial. With his military reform he reorganised the army, in which pride of place was given to the heavily armed infantry, the Macedonia phalanx. The army was in constant strict training. New kinds of weapons were introduced and also siege implements and new military tactics. The military reform was of great socio-political significance: giving a major rôle to the heavy infantry, which consisted of free peasant, Philip reduced the rôle of the Macedonian aristocracy, which served in the cavalry.

The financial reform consisted of the introduction of a Macedonian gold coin (the 'stater') which, minted in large quantities, undermined the economic position of Persia, since its gold coin (the 'daric') was insufficient for the requirements of trade in the eastern part of the Mediterranean.

For this reason the financial reform was of great significance to the development of trade and thus to the strengthening of the economic and political influence of Macedonia beyond its own frontiers.

In his effort to put a stop to the separatist tendencies of the old family aristocracy, Philip separated it from the large landowners and made it a court aristocracy.

Even in the first years of his rule Philip fought successfully against the Paionians and the Illyrians, extending the Macedonian state to the north-west as far as the Lake of Lychnida (Ohrid). Wishing to gain an exit to the sea, Philip took several towns on the Macedonian and Thracian littoral: Amphipolis (357), Pydna, Potidaea and Crenides (356). Capturing Amphipolis and Crenides, Philip advanced, colonised and gave its name to the latter. The

capture of these towns was of importance as they were to become centres for the exploitation of the gold mines of the Panaei district.

At the time when the attention of the Greek city-states was directed towards the "Holly Wars" (the first from 356 till 346, and the second 340-338 B.C.) Philip struck a blow against Chalcidice and destroyed that powerful league of Greek city-states with Olynthus at its head. He razed this rich and beautiful trading centre to its very foundations in 348 B.C.

Exploiting both the internal crisis and the disagreement among the Greek city-states Philip managed to attract a large number of supporters in Greece. Two parties were formed, conditionally called the "Macedonian" and "Anti-Macedonian", which waged a fierce political struggle against one another. The rich slave-owners and the aristocracy, led by the famous orator Isocrates, who saw the only hope for a disunited Greece in unification under the hegemony of Philip, belonged to the first party. The large majority of the people of Athens and other Greek city-states, however, came out as Philip's implacable enemies. Demosthenes was the leader of the anti-Macedonian party. Exhausted Athens, however, was in need of peace. Thus at one particular moment both parties decided to enter into negotiations with Philip. In 346 the Peace of Philocrates (named after the leader of the Athenian delegation) was concluded. By this peace Philip succeeded in legalising his conquests and gained time for a final settling of accounts with Athens and Greece. In 338 there was a decisive battle near Chaeronea, a city of Boeotia, at which the allied armies of Athens, Thebes and certain other city-states were utterly defeated. This victory and the pan-Hellenic congress which was summoned afterwards in Corinth established the foundations of Macedonian hegemony in Greece. A general peace was declared and a league formed whose foreign policy was to be conducted by the Macedonian emperor. At the same time war upon Persia was declared but very shortly afterwards, in 336, Philip was killed.

#### *Alexander of Macedon (336-323)*

Philip's son, Alexander, put into effect the projected Eastern Campaign. He was only twenty years of age when he acceded to the throne but he had already had considerable political and military experience by that time. In the first stage of the war, which began in 334, the western part of the Persian state was conquered. Alexander's swift progress was aided by the Greeks of Asia Minor and Egyptians who revolted against Persia and greeted the Mace-

donian Emperor as their liberator. As well as this, Alexander's army, though only half the size numerically, was superior thanks to its more modern arms.

With only two battles against the Persians (at Granicus) in 334 and Issus in 333) the fate of the Greek and Phoenician cities of Asia Minor was decided. They began to submit to Alexander without offering any resistance. After the destruction of Tyre in 332 and the fall of Gaza the road to Egypt lay open to Alexander. He was ceremonially greeted in Egypt and declared to be the son of Ammon.

The bloody Battle of Babylon in 331, near Gaugamela, decided the fate of the Persian state. Persia lost its principal military forces and the Emperor, Darius III, was banished. Babylon hailed Alexander and its priests acclaimed him as Emperor of Babylon. Persepolis was shortly to fall and then, in 330, Ecbatana, the capital of the Media. The penetration towards the East continued until the body of Darius fell into Alexander's hands.

Alexander's great and swift successes raised his hopes of conquering the "whole world" with ease for, according to the knowledge and thinking of the time, India was bordered by an ocean which was "the end of the world". In the Asian interior he was, however, forced to wage a long and difficult war with the freedom-loving tribes and, at the same time, dissatisfaction with him was growing within his army. Alexander did not, however, give up his intention of conquering India even though his progress in that direction brought great losses to the Macedonian army. When he entered India he had, nevertheless, to yield to growing opposition and left in 326. The inglorious return and tragic death of Alexander in 323 marked the end of this triumphal campaign.

While Alexander had been engaged in the fighting in the East the anti-Macedonian elements in Greece, Thrace and Macedonia itself rose in rebellion. The mighty victories and successes of Alexander had done nothing for the consolidation of the internal forces in Macedonia. It had lost enormous numbers of its population. Alexander's attempt at establishing a "world state" had been unsuccessful, for that state, which extended from the Western shores of the Balkan Peninsula to India in the East, and from the Danube and the Black Sea in the North to Egypt, Libya and Cirenaika in the South, included vast territories among which were relatively highly developed slave-owning countries and some which had already experienced the collapse of primitive society.

Alexander's outstanding character and his glorious victories were to make him hero and the subject of numerous legends. His victories spread and strengthened the name of Macedonia to such an extent that it came to influence our entire cultural heritage.



## *The Collapse of Alexander's State*

Immediately after the death of Alexander there began in his state the struggle of the Diadochi, the inheritors, which lasted from 323 until 281. The collapse of the state ended with the creation of the Hellenistic states which were governed by rulers of Macedonian origin.

In the age of the Diadochi Macedonia's economic position, which had greatly deteriorated during the time of Alexander's campaign, was again strengthened. The economy advanced thanks to the labours of the large numbers of slaves who arrived from the East. Goods and currency trade thrived as a result of the treasures plundered from the Persian Emperors. Many new cities were built and others were created by the amalgamation of several smaller settlements as was the case with Thessaloniki (Solun).

These undertakings were brought to a halt at the time of the first of the Epigoni (successors) from 281 to 221 as a result of serious ravages on the part of the Gauls. Antigonus Gonatas (277-239) defeated and put down the Gauls and founded the Antigonids dynasty in Macedonia which continued to rule right up to the establishment of Roman authority.

## MACEDONIA UNDER ROMAN RULE

### *The Macedonian-Roman Wars Establishment of Roman Authority*

Towards the end of the third century B.C. Macedonia was the strongest state in the Balkans and a great political force in the international field. At that time, however, the developed slave-owning state of Rome was seeking new territories outside Italy and turned its gaze towards the Balkans and from there towards the whole of the East. This inevitably led to a conflict of interests and war between Rome and Macedonia.

The first Macedonian War (215-205) was waged by the anti-Macedonian alliance, headed by Aetolian League and consisting of Sparta, Messenia, the Illyrians and the kingdom of Pergamum. Rome merely sent a fleet to the coast of Epirus. The peace that was concluded did not bring about any essential alterations but it was sufficient for Rome that at that moment Macedonia, because of its engagement in this war, was not able to come to the aid of Hannibal, the Carthaginian military leader whose relations with Rome were decidedly hostile.

The Second Macedonian War (200-193) marked the start of Rome's penetration eastwards. An anti-Macedonian alliance was again formed in which a significant rôle was played by the small Hellenistic states of Pergamum and Rhodes. By way of Italy the Romans entered the region of the Lake of Lychnida (Ohrid), reaching Lyncaestis (Bitola), Elimeia and Orestes and then returning to the Adriatic coast by way of the area south of the Lake of Lychnida. At the same time the Dardanians, who were allies of Rome, attacked Pannonia. A decisive battle was fought in Thessaly, Chynoscephale (197), at which the Macedonian army of Philip V (221-197) was defeated.

In accordance with the peace that was then concluded Philip was compelled to renounce all his possessions outside Macedonia, to pay heavy reparations, to surrender his fleet and to reduce the size of his army. The heaviest blow for Macedonia, however, was the fact that it was forced to recognize Greek independence.

The Third Macedonian War (171-167) was a fateful one for Macedonia. It was waged by the last Macedonian king, Perseus (179-163), who had the kings of Illyria and Odrin on his side and had established sympathy among those democratic elements in Greece who had soon discovered the fact that the "independence" gained from the Second Macedonian War simply amounted to a change in the overlord of their country. The greater part of the aristocracy and the richer sections of the population both in Greece and in Macedonia itself were not in favour of a war with Rome. The majority of the Hellenistic states and even some of Perseus' previous allies had gone over to the side of Rome.

After Perseus' initial successes Macedonia's fate was sealed at the one and only large battle, near Pydna in 168. The triumph to which the Roman Consul Paullus Aemilius bore off the booty that he had plundered in the war lasted for three days. Perseus himself and his family were taken to Rome. The cities of Epirus suffered particularly, being plundered and destroyed, and a hundred and fifty thousand of the population were sold as slaves.

With the aim of weakening and destroying the political unity of the country, the Romans split Macedonia into four regions. These regions, or meridii, were autonomous and autarchous republics without any political or economic links whatsoever with one another. The basic administrative units were the city districts (civitates and at the head of each republic there was an assembly (synedrion), a representative body consisting of representatives from the districts. Trade between individual districts was prohibited. The exploitation of the gold and silver mines, felling of timber for galleons, and marriages outside the territories in which people lived were all likewise forbidden. In this way the "freedom" which the Roman Consul Paulus Aemilius had proclaimed amounted to

nothing more than a replacing of monarchal form of government by a republican one and the setting up of the districts.

### *The Andriscus Rebellion*

Andriscus, a man of unknown origin who presented himself as Philip, son of Perseus, who had in fact died at the age of eighteen, tried to turn the dissatisfaction the mass of the people felt with the Roman authorities and with their own oligarchy to his own use. He succeeded in winning over the poverty-stricken masses, assembling an army and temporarily taking the power into his own hands. This movement in 149, known as the Andriscus Rebellion, was supported from outside by the Thracians. It was an affair of considerable size and created a great deal of trouble for the Romans who, nevertheless, managed to quell it with the aid of traitorous elements. After its failure, in 148, Macedonia was converted into a Roman province, thus losing even its seeming independence. From this time onwards it was ruled by appointees of Rome. A Roman army was stationed there and also a large number of Roman officials, merchants and usurers. This first Roman province in the Balkans became a base for future Roman operations on the peninsula and in Asia Minor.

### *The Situation of Macedonia Under Roman Rule*

The appearance of two further pretenders – Alexander, who presented himself as Perseus' second son, and the false Philip, in 142 denoted a particular attempt at opposition to the Romans. After that Macedonia continued to exist as a part of the Roman state right up to the close of the antique period. During this long period the geographical and ethnic concept of Macedonia altered several times as its administrative boundaries were frequently changed. The northern frontier was altered most often so that, after the attacks made by Kras against the barbarian tribes on that front, it reached to the Danube. From 27 B.C., when Augustus made a division of the provinces into the senatorial and imperial, Macedonia was declared a senatorial province and its territory significantly reduced. The changes continued in the following decades, most frequently in the form of the splitting off of new territories. After Diocletian's reforms Macedonia became part of the Diocesa of Moesia, while at the time of Constantine it was part of the Illyrian Prefecture. At the end of the fourth century it was split into two provinces, Macedonia Prima and Macedonia Salutaris. In V and

VI century, besides Macedonia Prima whose capital was Thessaloniki, Macedonia Secunda is mentioned with Stobi as its capital.

Along with this continual alteration in the boundaries and territories the ethnic composition of the population also changed. When it came under Roman rule the number of Italian colonialist immigrants increased. Apart from them there were living in Macedonia at that time Thracians and Illyrians and, during the late antique period, a variety of barbarian tribes. As a Roman province Macedonia was heavily exploited. Its wealth of ores came under Roman management and the population was plundered by means of various taxes. The support of the Roman administration and supplies for the army fell upon the shoulders of the local population. Macedonia was also obliged to provide a large number of soldiers for the Roman "auxiliary brigades".

During the Roman period a developed urban life existed in Macedonia. There were, in the main, three types of cities: free cities, colonies and municipiums. The cities of the first sort were the most privileged. In addition to those cities which had survived from the early period of Macedonia's history (Aegeae, Pella and Beroea) and those from the time of Philip and the Antigonids (Philippi, Heraclea and Thessaloniki), Heraclea Lyncaestis (near Bitola) and Stobi (near Gradsko), both situated on important roads, were large and important centres during the Roman period.

All the major stormy events in the history of the Roman state had their echoes in Macedonia as one of its provinces. Some of those events, as, for example, the civil wars, took place on its territories (the struggle between Caesar and Pompey and the war of Brutus and Cassius). Similarly the crises in the Roman Empire in the third and fourth centuries A.D. were felt in Macedonia: the extension of colonial relations and Christianity and the penetration of barbarian tribes. By the end of the third century Macedonia lay open to attacks from barbarian tribes. In the fourth century it was ravaged by the Visigoths and in the fifth century by the Huns. The massive penetration of the Slav tribes in the sixth century led gradually to the assimilation of the Macedonian population into the newly arrived tribes and to an alteration in its ethnic composition.

## MACEDONIA IN THE PERIOD OF EARLY FEUDALISM

### THE SETTLEMENT OF THE SLAVS ON THE BALKAN PENINSULA

#### *The Origins and Ancient Fatherland of the Slavs and their Settlement in the Danubian Regions*

The name Slavs appeared for the first time in the writings of an unknown Byzantine writer at the beginning of the fifth century. The form in which it then appeared was *Sclavini*. According to this author they lived somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Danube. Later on, in the sixth century, the Byzantine author Procopius was the first to call them *Sclabeoni*, *Sclaboni* and *Sclaboi*. At the same time as these names were in use the name *Anti* appeared in Byzantine writings of the sixth and seventh centuries.

The ancient homeland of the Slavs most probably lay between the Rivers Visla, Dneiper, Desna and the western Dniva and the Carpathians or, perhaps, in Polesje, in the triangle formed by Brest – Litovsk and Mohilev – Kiev. There they lived in family or clan organisations. The clan elected and changed its elders who, together with the council which consisted of all the members of the clan capable of work, managed all the clan's affairs. The clan had possession of the means of production. By this time the Slavs already had permanent villages. While the menfolk were out hunting or raiding the women looked after the homes and engaged in domestic work. The Slavs most probably engaged in primitive cultivation of the soil around their houses. Wood was the chief construction material used in the building of their houses and for that reason they became expert woodworkers, but were also acquainted with iron implements. When they went out on raids they went in large organised units.

From their ancient fatherland the Slavs spread out in all directions. For a certain time they came under the rule of the Eastern Goths, whose state was situated between the mouths of the Danube

and the Don. When the Huns appeared from the East the Slavs rebelled against the Goths. They were, however, soon defeated and their leader, Bozh, the first Slav to be mentioned in history, was executed together with his sons and a large number of the tribal leaders. In 375 the Huns destroyed the state of the Eastern Goths and the Slavs fell under their supreme authority. At that time they were to be found not merely in what today is Russia but also between the Danube and the Tisa.

After the decay of the Hun state the Slavs from near the River Tisa came under the rule of the Gepids while the others continued to descend towards the banks of the lower Danube, some as freemen led by their own ruler and others in league with the Huns and the Bulgars who, towards the end of the fifth century, had appeared around the Danube estuary.

#### *The Struggle of the Slavs for the Settlement of the Balkan Peninsula up to the Middle of the Sixth Century*

By about 517 the Slavs were already taking part in the struggle against Byzantium, appearing as far afield as Thermopylae, but were referred to at that time under the name of *Geti*. The first assault of the *Anti* on Byzantine territory south of the lower Danube took place at the time of the Emperor Justin I (518-527). They were defeated by German, the Strategist of all Thrace, and after this defeat remained at peace during the whole of the rest of Justin's rule.

From the time of the coming to the throne of Justinian (527-565) the Huns, i.e. the Bulgars, Slavs and Anti, ravaged all the parts of the Adriatic Sea as far as Constantinople, including Hella-da and Herzones, almost every year. The Thracian Strategist Hilvud held them back for three whole years so that they were unable to cross the Danube and he himself crossed to the opposite bank and slew and enslaved the "barbarians" there. Hilvud fell in a bitter struggle and the Huns, Slavs and Anti crossed the Danube at will. In 549 three thousand Slavs crossed the Danube and then, encountering no opposition, went on to cross the River Maritsa, defeating first the Archonts of the Byzantine army in Illyria and Thrace and then other military leaders. They ravaged Illyrian and Thracian territories and took a large number of strongholds there. Reaching as far as the Aegean Sea with an assault they captured the Thracian coastal city of Toper in the foothills of the Rhodopes. There, writes Procopius, they slew "all men up to the number of fifteen thousand, plundered the entire riches and made slaves of the women and children".

In the following year, 550, "such a mass of Slavs as never before" crossed the Danube and reached the surroundings of Nish with the aim of capturing Thessaloniki. However, on the news that the Byzantine military leader German was making preparations against them they abandoned their initial intention and set out for Dalmatia. There they were joined by other Slavs who had crossed the Danube later and in "complete freedom" roamed across the Roman Empire. They even wintered there in 550-551 "as though in their own land". Defeating the Byzantine army that was sent out against them at Edirne, they reached the Nether Wall, a day's march from Constantinople. They returned home with rich booty and in the following year, 551, once again entered en masse into Illyria.

In order to halt the Slav attacks on his territory Justinian built numerous fortresses along the Danube as well as watchtower and other military objects and, in the interior of his state, he repaired, renewed or rebuilt a large number of cities. Among the new cities he built was Justiniana Prima which, by a special decree of 535, became the seat of the Archbishops of Illyria.

In 558 or 559 the Slavs, together with the Hun Kutriguri, penetrated through Thrace into Greece as far as Thermopylae and to Constantinople and the Gallipoli Peninsula. Thanks, however, to the military intervention of Justinian's famous military leader Velizar they were forced to retreat.

#### *The Socio-economic Structure of the Slavs at the Time of the Settlement of the Balkan Peninsula*

At the time of the settlement of the left bank of the Danube and the Balkan Peninsula agriculture and animal husbandry were the basis of the economic existence of the Slavs. They lived in dug-outs forming small settlements or villages which were difficult of access and in the main situated near rivers, swamps or lakes. The land was the collective property of the entire community. The soil was cultivated in the Palevine fashion and a system characterised by unfenced meadows on bare or newly cleared land was in operation. As they were familiar with the working of metal they made weapons themselves and also various ornamental objects. They were particularly skilled woodworkers, manufacturing rafts and rowingboats known as monoksili from single tree trunks. In addition to this they manufactured woven and earthenware goods. Craftsmanship was the principal occupation of the members the large slav families.

In the course of their hundred years' warring against Byzantium the Slavs went through an accelerated evolution and differen-

tiation brought about by the military economy peculiar to the period, and by the conditions of war in general. They did not gain their means of existence solely from their own production but also from pillaging and taking over as booty the production of others. The war inevitably brought about a considerable concentration of authority in the hands of certain clan and tribal leaders who had distinguished themselves as military commanders. These people received a large share of the loot and this led to social differentiation in clan and tribal organisation. Such a stage of development constituted a military democracy, the first step in the growth of state organisation. The clan or tribal military leader, his position made secure both by his authority and his wealth (slaves and equipment), felt himself restricted by the clan and tribal organisation with its primitive democracy, equality and community of land-holding. He therefore used all his powers in an attempt to rid himself of those restrictions and become independent, but this process was to take a long time.

In the course of their wars the Slavs came to appreciate the possibilities afforded them by the exploitation of a slave labour force. Prisoners-of-war from other nationalities were set to work for them as slaves. After a precisely determined period of time the prisoners could either return to their own lands or else remain as freedmen with their former captors.

In their military campaigns the Slavs entered into tribal leagues, which at that time meant only temporary alliances of tribes for the sake of defence or attack and did not constitute any sort of more permanent political formations. They went into the attack in groups, carrying in their hands small shields, spears and swords, but never wearing armour. They made use of wooden bows and arrows the points of which had been dipped in a poisonous liquid. Against the superior arms of the Byzantine army cunning was their chief resort. Never engaging in conflict in open country, when on the defensive they employed the tactic of piling their carts in a circle and this created a rough and ready form of bulwark. The Slavs were particularly adept at the crossing of rivers and also cruised piratically in their *monoksili* on the Aegean Sea, plundering as far as the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmora and besieging both Salonika and Constantinople. Their womenfolk sometimes took part in the sieges. Around the beginning of the seventh century they made some significant advances in military skills and techniques.

Byzantine authors represent the Slavs as a people of tall stature and unusually strong, open-hearted and extremely hospitable. They had a particular fondness for music. Among the instruments they were familiar with was the tambour. They did not, however, respect treaties and lived in a state of discord and feud. The By-

zantines for their part were very well aware of how best to exploit these characteristic Slav weaknesses.

Perun, the god of thunder, was the Slavs' supreme deity, whom they believed to be the one and only creator and lord of the world. They also deified rivers and worshipped drayads, naiads and oreads. To all of these they made sacrifices and augured in accordance with the sacrifices. The Slavs burned their dead.

*Avar and Slav attacks on the  
Balkan Peninsula in the second  
half of the sixth century.*

After their settlement in the Pannonian Lowlands the Avars first focused their activities on Sirmium, which was to serve them as a base in their future penetrations towards Dalmatia and Constantinople. The Byzantine Emperor Justin II (565-572) succeeded in concluding a peace with the Avars by the terms of which their Khan Bayan surrendered Sirmium but was awarded a large annual compensation (574/5). When, after a lengthy period of peace, the Slavs made a renewed attack on the Balkan Peninsula, the new Emperor Tiberius (579-582) persuaded Bayan to set out against them. The campaign proved successful and the Avars gained a great deal of booty and set a large number of Byzantine subjects free from Slav bondage. The Slavs were forced to pay a large annual tribute to the Khan.

In 581 a hundred thousand Slavs assembled in Thrace with the intention of plundering the country. Because Tiberius was currently occupied with the Persian War they were able for four whole years to loot and pillage, devastating but also settling in certain areas of Greece. In the meantime the Avars had forced the Emperor to hand over Sirmium which had by that time been in a state of siege for several years. Only two years later, when Maurice ascended the throne in place of the deceased Tiberius the Avars increased the tribute levied on Byzantium and then proceeded to take Singidium and certain neighbouring towns. Making use of the fact that the Byzantine army was engaged in the East, the Avars in two attacks penetrated as far as the Long Wall and the Peloponnese, which they settled predominantly with Slavs. The Avar and Slav attacks continued after this but now Byzantium gained two major victories over the Slavs at the Erginia, a tributary of the Maritsa, in Thrace and in the neighbourhood of Edirne. In 587 the Avars also suffered defeat below Edirne and the war with them was thereupon brought to a temporary standstill; but not that with the Slavs, who continued their fierce pillaging in Thrace. The region between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains remained for

a number of years in the hands of the Avars and the Slavs and out of reach of Byzantine rule.

A year after the termination of the war with the Persians the Emperor Maurice directed his attention towards the Avars and the Slavs (592). This was to be the final effort to renew Byzantine rule throughout the Balkan Peninsula before its ultimate Slav colonization. In 594 the Byzantine army, led by the experienced military commander Priscus crossed the Danube, thus setting under way a cruel war against the Slavs in that area. The following years were filled with temporary successes for the Byzantine army, particularly in the battles against the Slavs. But there occurred a revolt in the ranks of the Byzantine army which destroyed all its military victories and Byzantine aspirations towards the driving out of the "barbarians". The Byzantine army in revolt entered Constantinople, killed Maurice and declared its own leader Phocas (602-610) as Emperor.

Thus Byzantium's last attempt to maintain and defend its Danubian frontier met with failure and a retreat far into the interior of its territories was forced upon Byzantium. This opened the way for an undisturbed colonization of the Balkan Peninsula by the Slavs. The Avars contributed to the success of the colonization, gathering a large number of the Slav tribes together under their leadership for joint attacks on the Balkan Peninsula and in the Eastern Alps.

#### THE SETTLEMENT OF THE SLAVS IN MACEDONIA AND THE FORMATION OF THE MACEDONIAN SCLAVENES

##### *Slav Settlement in Macedonia*

As was the case in the other parts of the Balkan Peninsula, the Slav settlement of Macedonia involved a long-lasting period of battles. The outcome of the fighting was that, by the first decades of the seventh century, the whole of Macedonia has been settled by Slav tribes. The Dragovites settled farthest to the south, along the course of the River Bistritsa in the area between Salonika and Ber (Berroea). Next came the Velegezites, and to the north of them the Berzites, in the Ohrid, Bitola and Veles region. The Sagudates were established close to Salonika and east of the city, towards the River Struma and Chalcydicae, the Rinhinites. The Strumyani settled the valleys of the River Struma and Strumeshnitsa and to the east

of the River Mesta the Smolyanites. One section of the Dragovites later settled in Polog.

The Slav settlement of Macedonia led to far-reaching ethnic and social changes. A section of the original population was killed in the various battles while the others withdrew in the coastal cities or in the mountainous places or were subjugated and included in the Slav symbiosis, contributing a great deal from their own material culture.

##### *Efforts of the Macedonian Slavs to Conquer the City of Salonika*

In the sixth century Salonika was the second largest city of the Byzantine Empire. It was a major crossroads on important land and sea routes. At the time of the Slav attack the fortress of Salonika was one of the strongest and most unassailable on the Peninsula and was used as the chief Byzantine support and base for setting out on offensives.

Out of all the unsuccessful Slav attacks on the city, which were sometimes undertaken in conjunction with the Avars, descriptions of only five have been preserved. The first of these was mounted on 26th October, 584, according to the old calendar. It was carried out by nearly five thousand brave and tried warriors. Only two years later Salonika was once more under attack. This time the Avars led the offensive. Having at their disposal various ballists, catapults and other equipment, the attackers held the city to siege for eight days. Plague, however, appeared among their ranks, causing a great deal of unrest and panic and this forced them to abandon the struggle.

The next attack on the city took place in 616 and was carried out by a Slav military and tribal alliance led by Prince Hatson. Virtually all the Slav tribes from Macedonia took part in this attack. They went into to the attack together with their families and households, intent upon an immediate settlement of the city. On the fourth day of the siege a general attack upon the city was launched. From the sea the Slav fleet, consisting of numerous boats fashioned from single tree-trunks, came into action but, suffering great losses, it was forced to beat a hasty retreat. This had a demoralising effect on the other attackers. Hatson was captured and killed in the course of the battle with the result that the siege was first halted and then finally abandoned.

Bearing from this defeat, the Slavs joined forces with the Avars in their next attack upon Salonika. In 618 their allied armies appeared in front of the city walls in an attempt to take the city which lasted for thirty-three days in all. The attempt met with no



success, the Avars abandoned the siege and the Slavs concluded an armistice. The peace lasted until 674 when the city was attacked once more. The signal for the attack was the capture of Prince Prebond or Prvud, the leader of the Macedonian Slavs, who was put to death later in the same year. The siege and looting in the neighbourhood of Salonika lasted for almost two years. Finally, on 25th July 677 (old style) a general attack lasting for three days was mounted on the city but this too ended, like all the other attempts, in a retreat.

In the course of the struggles, which lasted with various breaks for nearly a hundred years, Slav-Byzantine antagonism became more acute. The Macedonian Slavs aimed at taking the city and thereby cutting Byzantium off from a very important support in the Balkans. Byzantium, by keeping hold of Salonika, saw a possibility of effecting the return of her lost territories. These wars led to closer alliances among the Macedonian Slavs and their unification into more extensive tribal units.

#### *The Formation of the Sclavenes in Macedonia*

The earliest mentions of sclavenes as a general term for the areas settled by Slavs come from the second half of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century. There were sclavenes in the Trans-Danubian region, on the Adriatic coast, in Greece, Epirus, Thessaly, the Peloponnese, Thrace and in Macedonia. It can be assumed that the Macedonian sclavenes (under this heading are understood the sclavenes in the neighbourhood of Salonika) existed as organised clan and tribal units from the eighties of the sixth century. Normally one tribe was settled in each of these sclavenes. Thus the sclavenes in which the Dragovite tribe lived stretched to the west of Salonika. Later on, in the second half of the ninth century, it took on the name of Dragovitia and had its own bishop. The Sagudates, Velegezites, Vayunites, Berzites and others all had their own sclavenes. In the sclavnes, apart from the Slavs themselves, there also lived various other previously settled peoples, not initially mixing with the Slavs. The sclavenes were headed by archons or exarchs or reges. There was also a special title of exarchon which was held by an anonymous Slav leader.

By the end of the sixth century the Balkan sclavenes and hence those of Macedonia already represented a significant military power and, led by the Avars, continually threatened Salonika and Constantinople. But shortly they themselves were to suffer a great attack on their own territories. This attack was carried out in 658 by the Emperor Constantine II (641-668) who dealt them a heavy

blow and enslaved large numbers of the population. This time the sclavenes genuinely acknowledged the supreme authority of Byzantium instead of merely giving it nominal recognition, as had been the case up till then. But this state of submission was not to last for long. When, in 676, the Rinhinian chieftain Prvud was put to death because of his intention of uniting all the nearby sclavenes and taking Salonika, the sclavenes of the Strumyani, Sagudates and Dragovites all rose in revolt. Their uprising was unsuccessful but nevertheless they had formed the first powerful military league of the Macedonian sclavenes.

Byzantium's situation was complicated even more by the coming of the Bulgars who, together with the Slavs, formed a state in the north-eastern part of the Balkans. The Bulgars compelled certain Slav tribes and even Byzantium itself to pay them tribute. The Emperor Justinian II (685-695), however, put a stop to the payment and, relying on his powerful cavalry, attacked and defeated the Bulgars. Encouraged by this success, he set out against the sclavenes and got as far as Salonika (688/9). Subduing a large number of the Slav tribes, he resettled some of them in Asia Minor. The greater part of the Balkans, held by the Bulgars and the sclavenes, however, remained outside the reach of Byzantine authority. Byzantium endeavoured to reduce this danger by means of the resettlement of the Slavs and by colonisation by Byzantine subjects and other peoples. In systematic fashion the Macedonian Slavs were pushed from the south to the northern parts of Macedonia and an attempt at assimilation was made. At the same time Byzantium continued its military offensives against the Macedonian sclavenes. At the time of Irena (780-797) military measures were undertaken to subdue the Slav tribes in the neighbourhood of Salonika and in Greece (Ellada). This campaign (783) which reached as far as the Peloponnese enjoyed complete success. The Slavs nevertheless continued to hold the whole of Epirus, a part of Ellada, and parts of both the Peloponnese and Macedonia. At the beginning of the ninth century a rebellion which reached large proportions took place in the Peloponnese but it was fairly soon put down.

With the aim of pacifying the country the Emperor Nicephorus I (802-811) ordered "Christians" to move from areas of his empire into the sclavenes where they received land and were obliged to do military service. In this way Byzantium broke up the compact nature of the Macedonian sclavenes, its aim being to accelerate the subordination of the Slav population and to weaken its monolithic ethnic structure.

Siding with the Bulgarian Khan Krum, the sclavenes played a decisive role in the war between Byzantium and Bulgaria (809-811). The Byzantine army was decisively defeated and the Emperor Nicephorus himself killed (811). Krum succeeded in uni-

ting into a single league all the slavens, which by this time only nominally recognised Byzantine authority.

During the reign of the Emperor Michael II (820-829) the Macedonian slavens staged a rebellion led by Thomas the Slavonian who besieged Constantinople from 821 to 823. But Thomas' movement was soon to suffer defeat and the rule of Byzantium, temporarily overthrown, was once again established. Renewed wars against Byzantium took place during the time of the Emperor Theophilus (829-842). In 836/7 an unknown exarch of the slavene from the mountainous region near Salonika rebelled. This is the last mention of the Macedonian slavens to be found in Byzantine sources. It can be assumed that the slavens ceased to exist when, in the first half of the ninth century the regions of Salonika and Durrës (Durazzo) were organised as distinct administrative and territorial units (themes). Shortly afterwards the theme of Nicopolis was set up in Epirus and, on the establishment of the theme of Strymon, the theme of Salonika was united with the existing Thracian themes, Thrace and Macedonia. The building up of such a system of themes was a sign of the gradual establishment of Byzantine authority in particular areas of the Balkans from which it had previously been excluded by South Slav colonisation. Situated close to the influential centre of Byzantium's military and political power and to a large degree dependent upon Constantinople, the Macedonian slavens did not manage to develop into discrete state bodies.

#### *The Expansion of Bulgarian Rule Into Macedonia*

Relations between Bulgaria and Byzantium became more strained when Khan Presian (835-852) became ruler of the Bulgarian state. Not adhering to the treaties concluded by his predecessors, he made use of Byzantium's engagement in the wars with the Arabs and the Macedonian Slavs to bring the thirty years' peace to an end. Khagan Izbud entered the lands of the Smolyanites with a large force of men. At this time several regions of northern Macedonia fell under Bulgarian authority. Bulgarian conquests in Macedonia continued during the reign of Boris (852-889). He took a large part of the Strumitsa region, built himself into the Bregalnitsa area and even managed to expand beyond the Vardar into western Macedonian districts. When, in 864, a peace treaty was signed with Byzantium a large part of the territory of Macedonia was already ruled by the Bulgarians. According to the terms of the treaty Boris was obliged to accept Christianity, in the form of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, as his state religion.

## THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY AND LITERATURE AMONG THE MACEDONIAN SLAVS

### *Cyril and Methodius and the Creation of the Slavonic Alphabet*

On their coming to Macedonia the pantheist Slavs had destroyed the "God's temples" of the native Christian population. Shortly afterwards, however, they themselves came to accept the Christian religion. The Byzantine state and its inseparable assistant the Church played the chief rôle in their conversion. During the time of the Iconoclast Emperors the christianisation of the Macedonian Slavs was particularly active. By the eighth century, among the others Balkan's eparchies, there existed a Macedonian eparchy controlled by a metropolitan and with its centre in Salonika. The bishops of eighteen Macedonia towns, among which were Heraclea (Lerin), Castra (Kostur), Edessa (Voden) and Serres, were subject to the Metropolitan of Salonika.

While still in their ancient fatherland and also after their coming to the Balkans the Slavs had employed "lines and incisions" for the recording of certain matters which were of importance to them. When they were christianised, writes Tsrnorizets Hrabar, the first defender of the Slavonic alphabet and literacy, they struggled without any specific rules to write in a Slavonic language with the aid of Roman and Greek letters. The difficulty was exceedingly great when it was a matter of recording those sounds in the Slavonic language for which the necessary letters did not exist in the Roman and Greek alphabets. This demonstrates, however, that even before the creation of the Slavonic alphabet the Slavs had possessed some sort of literacy.

The Slavonic alphabet was formulated by Constantine (Cyril), and he, his brother Methodius and certain of their pupils translated the necessary liturgical books from Greek into the language spoken by the Macedonian Slavs of the Salonika district. In the oldest Slavonic translations the language is known as Slavonic. This old-Macedonian language was quite well understood by the other Slav tribes since, at that time, no significant differences existed among the speech-forms of the various Slavs.

When they had prepared the necessary translations Constantine and Methodius, with a group of their pupils, went in the rôle of Byzantine missionaries, to Greater Moravia where they set themselves to the organisation of education and religious services in a Slavonic language which was comprehensible to the Greater Moravians. After the death of the leaders of the Moravian mission



(Constantine in 869 and Methodius in 885) there followed difficult days for Slavonic religious worship and education and for the disciples of the brothers from Salonika, who were exiled or sold as slaves. The consequences of the mission were, however, of epoch-making significance for the cultural development of the Slav peoples: the Slavonic alphabet and Slavonic literacy lived on. So, too, did Clement, Naum and Constantine the Presbyter, the most important pupils of the brothers from Salonika, who carried on the work of their great teachers.

#### *Clement of Ohrid and Formation of the Ohrid Literary School*

Among the most famous disciples of the brothers from Salonika banished or mistreated by the Latin Moravian clergy were Clement, Naum and Angelarius. Exiled from Greater Moravia, they made their way to the state of Bulgaria. The Bulgarian Prince Boris received them well and employed them in the expansion of Slavonic literacy and worship in the areas of Macedonia newly conquered from Byzantium. Clement was dispatched as a teacher to the region of Kutmichevitsa, whose main centres were Devol, Glavinitsa and Ohrid. In the course of twenty-three years (as a teacher in Kutmichevitsa until 893, and then as a bishop in a district of Velika) Clement succeeded in bringing literacy to about three thousand five hundred people, clergy and teachers, and instituting worship in the Slavonic language which the majority of the inhabitants of the area spoke.

Throughout the whole of his life Clement was also engaged in writing. He was the first original Slav and Macedonian poet, orator and educator and was also a translator from Greek. He was involved in translation right up to the last hour of his life (d. Ohrid, 916), completing on his sick bed his translation of the liturgical text of the Holy Triod. Of even greater significance are his own original works. He wrote a large number of sermons, prayers, hymns, songs of praise and other psalmodic songs in honour of Jesus Christ, the Mother of God, John the Baptist and others. He also wrote a number of "words", sermons with which he taught the population how to perform the religious services correctly and how to live a humane life. His works are simple, immediate and intelligible to all. They are full of warmth and lyricism. Because of these characteristics Clement's works soon came to hold a worthy place in almost all the Slavonic languages and were copied by various Slav writers in the course of several centuries. His fruitful educational, religious and literary activities put Clement in the

front rank among the creators of the oldest Slavonic and Macedonian literature. The building of numerous churches and monasteries in the areas in which he lived and worked is also linked with the name of Clement of Ohrid. There is evidence that Clement was the creator of a new alphabet, one more easily written than that of Cyril.

In 893, when the Bulgarian Prince nominated Clement Bishop of Velika, Naum, a "brother" and fellow-journeys of Clement's from his earliest years, succeeded to his position as teacher in Kutmichevitsa. He continued the work of his great predecessors, educating the people and becoming popular with the local inhabitants. After teaching for seven years Naum retired to a monastery. In 910, supported by the Bulgarian Prince, he built his own monastery, in which he was buried after his death in the same year and which today bears the name of St. Naum's.

#### *Pupils of the Ohrid Literary School*

After the deaths of Clement and Naum their literary work, by now mostly copyist work, was carried on by the pupils of the Ohrid Literary School, as the school of these two Slav educators has come to be known. The writings of certain, anonymous members of this school, authors of biographies of Clement and Naum, are well known. Best known are the authors of the unpreserved general Slavonic Lives of the Ohrid educators. Also anonymous is the talented and true continuer of Clement's literary tradition, his pupil who created the magnificent Service of St. Clement of Ohrid which is preserved in fifteenth century copy.

The main task of the pupils of the Ohrid educators was the copying of the works of Clement of Ohrid and of numerous liturgical and theological texts.

It is thanks to the activity of these pupils that the oldest Slavonic texts, written in the domain of the Ohrid Literary School, have been preserved. The oldest of these texts, presenting the literacy of the old-Macedonian period, date from the twelfth century. In Glagolitic script, they were either written down on Macedonian soil or have within them traces of the old-Macedonian originals. These are the Aseman Gospels, the Zograf Gospels, the Marin Gospels, the Sinai Psalter and the Sinai Euhologij.

#### *Constantine the Presbyter*

Constantine the Presbyter was one of Cyril's and Methodius' younger disciples and a fellow-worker of Naum of Ohrid who later

became a bishop. He worked somewhere in eastern Macedonia in the period when the Ohrid Literary School was active in western Macedonia. The details of Constantine's biography are not well known. It is known with some certainty that he came from Constantinople to the Bulgarian court and spread the Slavonic service of worship and literacy in various parts of the Bulgarian state of the time. He began his work at the command of Prince Boris and on the advice of Naum of Ohrid, which could only have been in 893 at the latest. By that date he had already compiled his well-known Teaching Gospels, whose contents are varied. The basic part of this work contains fifty-one sermons of which forty-two are original works while to the others he added introductions and conclusions. The work is of significance to Slavonic literature despite the fact that it is in part a translation from Byzantine literature.

In 906, at the behest of Czar Simeon, Constantine, as a bishop, translated the four Sermons Against the Aryans by Athanasius of Alexandria. Together with this translation is his translation of the Epistle for the Pascal Feast. Constantine also translated the Catechism of Cyril of Jerusalem.

#### *Tsrnorizets Hrabar*

Slavonic education and religious worship developed with considerable success in the Bulgarian state within the boundaries of which Macedonia was situated. The Greek language was gradually ousted and replaced by the Slavonic language in the Slav churches. The Greek clergy lost the positions they had hitherto held. This led to a reaction against Slavonic literacy among the non-Slav population and the Greek clergy. Evidence of this is to be found in the work "O Pismeneh" by the insufficiently known defender of Slavonic literacy, Tsrnorizets Hrabar. This work, which has been preserved in a large number of copies, lays out the line of development of Slavonic literacy, from the use of "lines and incisions" by the ancient Slavs, through the use of the Roman and Greek alphabets to the invention of the Slavonic alphabet by Cyril the Philosopher. It is, as far as is known to date, the first polemical work devoted to Slavonic education. The details of Tsrnorizets Hrabar's life are still unverified. It is assumed that he was acquainted with the pupils of Cyril and Methodius and that he may have lived at the time of Clement, Naum and Constantine of Bregalnitsa. The opinion dominates that he worked in places where the Ohrid Literary School was active.

## THE BOGOMIL MOVEMENT IN MACEDONIA

### *The Strengthening of Bulgarian Rule in Macedonia*

The Bulgarian ruler Simeon (893-927) extended his rule to new areas of Macedonia. His armies penetrated towards Durrës and Salonika and, according to a boundary pillar found in the village of Narsh, near Salonika, the Bulgarian frontier was only twenty-two kilometres from Salonika itself. In accordance with the terms of the peace treaty of 927 between Bulgaria and Byzantium, when Simeon's son Petar (927-969) came to the throne, the occupied territory in Macedonia was officially recognised as a Bulgarian province. The Macedonian Slavs began to be treated as Bulgarian subjects, a fact that was later accepted by Byzantine historians and chronicles.

With the establishment of Bulgarian rule the same sort of military and administrative divisions, into comitats which were governed by comites that already existed in Bulgaria itself, were instituted in Macedonia. To begin with the comites were the one-time tribal princes, who governed independently or semi-independently in their own districts, but gradually they became the obedient tools of the ruler. As officials of the Bulgarian state the comites were appointed by the ruler and could be replaced by him at any time. As well as the comites there were the tarkans (most probably military officers), judges and tax and other officials of the Bulgarian state. In addition, by opening many churches and establishing in them a well-trained clergy, the central government aimed to involve the church in the strengthening of Bulgarian rule in Macedonia.

### *The Development of Feudal Relations*

Clan and tribal relationships were still in existence among the Macedonian Slavs at the beginning of the tenth century. Tribal princes ruled over certain tribal principalities which lived in discord and dispute with one another. Within the pattern of tribal fragmentation agricultural commune, a transitional phase between clan and territorial communes, continued.

With the strengthening of Bulgarian and Byzantine rule in Macedonia the decline of tribal self-government among the Macedonian Slavs was speeded up as by that time both Bulgaria and Byzantium were states with formed feudal social relations. More and more agricultural communes were being transformed into ter-

ritorial communes which accelerated the breakdown of clan links and the splitting-up of co-operatively held property. In other words the formation of a feudal system was advanced.

As a result of the breaking-up of free rural communes there appeared a large number of feudal lords. The number of those who received holdings and dependent population from the hands of the Bulgarian and Byzantine rulers was not small. Among them were those Macedonian princes who put themselves at the service of the Bulgarian or Byzantine states. Many foreigners also came into Macedonia who, receiving land, a working population and privileges, became large-scale feudal lords. Parallel with this large-scale church and monastery land-holdings were formed and continued to grow. Church holdings were increased by gifts from the rulers and also by means of the confiscation of rural holdings, chiefly from the peasant (селани-јазичници) who were still numerous in Macedonia.

The establishment of feudal social relations increased the exploitation of the peasantry, both of the free peasants who still lived in rural communes and of those who were feudal dependants. Their situation worsened, particularly in the middle of the tenth century when the profitable wars of conquest of the Bulgarian state came to an end and the increased requirements of the vast military and administrative system of the court and the church had to be met through extra contributions and increased feudal exploitation. This rendered class antagonisms more acute and led to the appearance of the Bogomil movement.

### *The Bogomil Movement*

This movement made its first appearance, most probably in Macedonia, during the reign of the Bulgarian Czar Petar. The basic source on the movement in the tenth century is the Sermon Against the Bogomils by Presbyter Kozma, written in condemnation of the Bogomils in order to alienate the masses from them lest they became "heretics". Kozma claimed that the first teacher and propagator of the movement was the Priest Bogomil. A legend about Bogomil has been preserved among the population of the villages on Mt. Babuna. The Bogomils were later to be known also as Babuns. The legend says that the Priest Bogomil was born in the village of Bogomila. There he lived and died and his grave was to be found in what was known as the "Great Church" which was built into the ground and served the Bogomils as a house of prayer. The Bogomils also had hiding-places near the village of Nezhilovo.

The Bogomil movement was a new phenomenon but it contained many elements adopted from the Paulician and Marsalian

teachings which had been spread throughout Macedonia by colonists resettled from Asia Minor by the Byzantine Emperors with a view to destroying the compactness of the Macedonian Slavs. Many of the dualistic, anti-ecclesiastical and anti-feudal characteristics of these movements found their expression in the Bogomil ideology. The Bogomil preachers taught that there existed a struggle between good and evil and that good would conquer in the end. They maintained that the rich were the servants of the devil and that anyone who submitted to them was going against God. According to them the entire visible world with all its laws and systems had been created not by God but by the devil. They opposed the existence of churches and monasteries, were against the use of crosses, icons and feasts and propagated the belief that man could pray to God without the aid of a priest.

The Bogomil movement also directed its energies against secular feudal lords, the state body and the czar himself.

There were three categories of Bogomils, the "perfect Bogomils", "ordinary believers" and "learners". The first played the leading role and considered themselves to be true Christians, being thoroughly conversant with Bogomil teachings and leading a strict, ascetic life. The "ordinary believers" were accepted as members of the communities or brotherhoods, formed on the model of the early Christian communities. The Dragovite, Melnik and other such communities are known to have existed in Macedonia. The "learners" were also members of the communities but were obliged to listen to sermons delivered in those brotherhoods. They came principally from the ranks of the peasantry, the poor of the towns and slaves and listened enthusiastically to the sermons of the "perfect" spurring them on to fight against the feudal lords. The Priest Bogomil had also his own helpers or apostles.

The swift spread of the Bogomil movement caused Czar Petar to take energetic measures for its suppression. To this end he requested and received instructions from Theophylact, Patriarch of Constantinople. According to Kozma, as a result of this thousands of Bogomils suffered, being thrown into prison. These cruel measures did not, however, succeed in destroying the Bogomil movement which spread more and more, becoming a general-peoples' movement.

## THE EMPIRE OF SAMUEL

### *Rebellions Against Bulgarian and Byzantine Rule*

After Czar Petar's death (30th January, 969), the Bulgarian state found itself in an extremely precarious situation, menaced as it was by the danger of falling an easy prey to the Russians who were penetrating unchecked ever deeper into its territory. Afraid of these systematic Russian encroachments upon Bulgaria, Byzantium decided to intervene at once and make safe the imperial throne of Boris and Roman, Czar Petar's sons who were at that time being held as hostages in Constantinople. And, true, Boris II became czar (969-971). Shortly afterwards, however, in 969, the Russian Prince Sviatoslav captured both Boris and his brother in Preslav, the Bulgarian capital.

At this juncture there occurred an uprising organised by the comitopouli, the young princes David, Moses, Aaron and Samuel, sons of Prince Nikola, an extremely powerful figure in the Bulgarian state. The uprising was successful but it has not as yet been possible to ascertain which areas of the Bulgarian state came to be governed by the comitopouli. The Russian invasion and the subsequent Russo-Byzantine war had created a convenient situation for such an uprising and contributed towards its success. In 971, however, the Byzantine Emperor Ivan I Tsimiscas (969-976) surrounded Sviatoslav in Silistria (Drstar) on the Danube and he was compelled to surrender, leave Bulgaria and abandon all his plans. After this decisive conquer, Byzantine annexed Bulgaria to the Empire. Ivan I Tsimiscas thereupon conveyed Boris, now liberated from Russian captivity, and Roman to Constantinople in triumph. There he deprived them of their imperial vestments and the Bulgarian crown which he handed over to the church. Although it is not known what Nikola's sons were doing during the reign of Ivan Tsimiscas, it is clear that before his return to Constantinople the Emperor had succeeded in subduing the other parts of the former Bulgarian Empire as well, so that Rashka too came under his rule.

### *The Formation and Expansion of Samuel's State*

In 976, the year in which Tsimiscas died on 11th January, the four brothers David, Moses, Aaron and Samuel, raised a rebellion. At first the four of them jointly ruled the newly established state, which was completely freed from Byzantine overlordship by their

revolt. But shortly afterwards David was killed by Vlach shepherds somewhere between Castra and Prespa, and Moses fell at the siege of Serres. In the struggle for the throne which ensued between Aaron and Samuel the latter, a much more talented leader and statesman, was victorious. Aaron and all his family were killed, with the exception of his son Ivan Vladislav who was saved by Samuel's son Radomir Gavril. Such were the circumstances in which the life of the new monarchy began.

Making use of the Byzantine army's engagement in the East, Samuel attacked the "entire West" – not merely Thrace and Macedonia and the immediate surroundings of Salonika but also Thessaly, Greece and the Peloponnese. In the process of so doing he took a large number of towns, including Larissa, the siege of which lasted for several years. The inhabitants of Larissa were re-settled by Samuel in the interior of his state and incorporated in his military records as his own soldiers. From Larissa he also removed the remains of St. Achilles to Prespa, where he had his capital and a magnificent palace.

Wishing to take revenge upon Samuel, the Byzantine Emperor Basil II gathered together an army and crossed over the frontier regions of the Rhodopes and the River Maritsa into Bulgaria. However, he suffered a crushing defeat near Trajan's Gate (today's Ihtiman) on 17th August, 986. Almost the whole of the Byzantine cavalry and a large section of the infantry were wiped out and Basil himself narrowly escaped death.

During the following years such internal strife raged in the Byzantine Empire that Samuel was able to extend his rule to new territories unchecked. Berroea (Ber) was captured in the summer of 989. Samuel also entered Dalmatia with a large army and began to attack the state of the young King Vladimir. When Samuel entered Diocleia, Vladimir withdrew to the mountains but was persuaded by one of his tribal chieftains to surrender to Samuel. Samuel immediately banished him to Prespa, continuing himself to conquer, devastate and plunder the whole of Dalmatia. He fired the cities of Kotor and Dubrovnik and razed villages and entire hill regions as far as Zadar. Possessing no navy Samuel was unable to hold a single coastal town and his entire expedition ended in a swift return with rich booty. He also devastated Bosnia and Rashka.

Vladimir was conducted to Prespa, where the imperial palace and seat were, but did not remain a captive for long. Kossara, Samuel's daughter, fell in love with him and they were soon married. The Czar pronounced Vladimir a King and gave him back the lands of his forebears, adding to them Dyrrachium and all its territories. Later he returned the lands of Trebinje to Dragomir, Vladimir's uncle. In this way Vladimir became Samuel's loyal vassal.

When civil war ended in the Byzantine state Basil decided to terminate the peace of 987 to 990 and began a new campaign against Samuel. The war lasted for four years (990/1-994/5) and in this time Basil succeeded in capturing and destroying a number of Samuel's strongholds. Somewhere towards the end of 994 or in the course of 995 Samuel set out against Salonika. Gregory Taronites, the Governor of Salonika, was killed in the fighting when he was trying to save his son Ashot who had been ambushed while out on a reconnaissance of Samuel's troops. When Basil learned of the defeat of his Dux he sent the Supreme Commander in the West, Magister Niciphorus Uranus, to Salonika. There he discovered that, since the fighting near Salonika, Samuel had been plundering in Thessaly, Boeotia, Attica and the Peloponnese and set out in his direction. The River Spercheius was in spate and this delayed him. He was forced to encamp close to its bank. Samuel's army was encamped on the opposite bank. Uranus succeeded in finding a suitable crossing-place and that night his army attacked their sleeping adversaries. Many of Samuel's soldiers were killed in this unexpected attack. Samuel himself and his son were gravely wounded but managed to return secretly to Macedonia. After this battle, which was fought in 994 or 995, Samuel was obliged to vow obedience to Basil in writing.

### *The Proclamation of the Empire*

When it seemed likely that the Byzantine ruler would accept an offer of peace, Samuel had himself proclaimed Emperor. The coronation could only have been carried out with the agreement of the Pope in Rome as Samuel was in constant conflict with Byzantium and had no hopes of gaining the crown of the Bulgarian rulers as it was then in Constantinople.

Who actually crowned Samuel in the name of Pope Gregory V (3.V.996-13.II.999) and when and where the coronation took place can only be surmised. The crown which Samuel received from the Pope was a King's crown as Rome was not in the habit of conferring any other title except in the case of the title of Emperor which was given only to the rulers of the Franks and later the German rulers. For this reason Samuel could justifiably regard himself as a basileus, i.e. an emperor like his predecessors and successors, even though Byzantium did not recognise his title. The coronation gave an international character and international recognition to Samuel's Empire and was in the interests of both Samuel himself and the Papacy as they shared the desire to weaken and reduce the Byzantine Empire as much as possible.

### *Unsuccessful Wars with Byzantium*

When news of Samuel's coronation reached Basil he once more sent Uranus to the attack. After three months of burning and looting in enemy territory Uranus returned to Constantinople.

Dyrrachium was lost to Samuel for a certain period of time. After the marriage of his daughter Miroslava to Ashot Samuel had handed over the Governorship of Dyrrachium to his second son-in-law with the full agreement of Vladimir who until then had governed this region. Ashot, however, went over to Byzantium and was awarded the title of Magister while Miroslava, his wife, became a lady-in-waiting at the court. Soon after that the leaders of Dyrrachium made contact with Basil and surrendered the city to him.

Thanks to his propaganda Samuel too, however, achieved a certain limited success. A number of suspected Byzantine nobles had taken refuge with him, among them Vatatz with the entire family and Basil Glavas. This caused the Emperor Basil to send a further offensive against Samuel's state. Going via Philippopolis, it destroyed many cities in the region of Serdica. In the year 1000 a large Byzantine army set out against the fortified cities, capturing Great and Little Preslav and Pliska, on the far side on the River Maritsa. In 1001 Basil himself travelled via Salonika in the direction of Berroea, which the Katarchon Dobromir, who was married to a relative of Samuel's, surrendered to him. Basil then took Kolidron, close to Berroea, and turned to the siege of Servia. Its governor Nikolitsa met the Byzantine attacks bravely but nevertheless both he and the city fell into Basil's hands. Returning to Constantinople, Basil took Nikolitsa, on whom he conferred the honour of a patrician, with him. But Nikolitsa managed to escape to Samuel and together they attacked Servia. Basil once again intervened and succeeded in capturing Nikolitsa, whom he sent in chains to exile in Constantinople.

From Servia the Emperor proceeded to Thessaly where he repaired the damaged fortresses, taking those which Samuel still held. He transferred the garrisons of those cities which he had re-fortified to Voler on the River Maritsa in Thrace, replacing them with Byzantine garrisons. Edessa (Voden), which he wrested by force from its warlike Governor, the Katarchon Drazhan, received similar treatment. Drazhan he took with him to Salonika, requesting that he should settle there. At the same time he transferred Uranus from Salonika to Antioch, because of the Arabs, and established in his place the patrician David Arijant.

In the following year, 1002, Basil set out for Vidin and succeeded in taking it after eight months on 15th August, 1002. On the same day Samuel, after a forced march through Thrace, entered

Adrianople, from which he returned with a great deal of booty. This, however, did not prevent Basil from continuing with his conquests. He headed for Skopje, where Samuel was at that moment. Attacked unexpectedly Samuel fled with his people without putting up any sort of resistance. At that time the son of Czar Petar was the Governor of Skopje appointed by Samuel and he surrendered the city to the Byzantine Emperor. From Skopje Basil went to Pernik which was being defended by the great warrior Krakras. Incurring heavy losses of men and time, Basil did not, however, succeed in taking this fortress and returned to Constantinople.

At some stage during this period Samuel came into conflict with Hungary because his son, who had married a Hungarian princess, had left his wife. The cordial relations that had existed between Samuel and King Stephen I (997-1038) came to an end. The King went over to Basil who had called upon his aid. Stephen defeated Samuel and returned loaded with rich spoils to Hungary.

#### *The Battle of Belasitsa and the Death of Samuel (1014)*

The Byzantine attacks and the plundering and devastation of Samuel's territory became more and more frequent. Knowing that the enemy was entering by the gorges of the Rhodopes Samuel threw a wide encirclement round them, closing them off and securing them with a strong force.

When the Emperor reached these gorges Samuel's troops did not allow him to pass through. But he was presently joined by the Strategus Theophylact Botaneiates, the successor to David Arianjant, who, with a forced march, surrounded Mount Belasitsa with his troops. On 29.VII.1014 he suddenly attacked Samuel's army in the rear from the mountain. Many were slain and even more captured. Samuel himself was saved by his son who put him on a horse and led him to the fortified town of Prilep. After this victory Basil ordered that the eyes of Samuel's captured soldiers be put out. It is said that there were fifteen thousand of them and that, at the head of every hundred of these wretches, one was left with a single eye. In this sorry state they were despatched to Samuel who was so shaken by the sight of them that he died two days later, on 6.X.1014.

#### *The Internal Situation in Samuel's Empire*

Samuel's Empire included the whole of Macedonia (apart from Salonika), of Thessaly and Epirus, Albania and the coastal

slavenes of Diocleia, Travunya and Zachlumia (Hum) and the Neretva region (excluding the islands) as far as Cetina; also Serbia, i.e. Rashka, Bosnia and a considerable part of Bulgaria. In this large empire the first and most numerous of the population were the Macedonian Slavs and the Slavs of Greece and the Peloponnese, followed by the Bulgarians, then Serbs, Croats and Romeici (Byzantines), Albanians and Vlachs. On the territory of the empire there also lived Vardariot Turks and Armenians, whom Samuel had settled in Pelagonia, Prespa and Ohrid. These latter also existed in Thrace, while in the coastal regions there also lived Romanians. At the head of such a conglomerate of people stood the "Czar of Bulgaria", Samuel "Servant of God". In Byzantium and the rest of the world the belief prevailed that this empire was a normal continuation of the collapsed Bulgarian Empire; for only such a state, apart from the Byzantine Empire could have an emperor. Samuel himself who, adhering to the spirit of the time, did not want to be known in any other way contributed to such an attitude. Nevertheless this was a newly created state since its nucleus was a completely different one and its domestic and foreign policies were essentially different. The centre of the state was in the far south of the Balkans, in today's Macedonia, with several moveable capitals, the majority of which possessed exquisitely ordered palaces (Prespa, Ohrid, Prilep, Bitola, Pronishte, Setina, etc.). All these capitals, with their palaces, were in the region of the one-time Macedonian slavenes. But, in spite of this, Samuel was carrying on the traditions of the earlier Bulgarian Empire for reasons of prestige.

Little is known about the socio-economic situation and the organisation of Samuel's state. It is assumed that the majority of the peasants were freemen. The dependent peasants were either *serfs* or *churchmen*. The serfs worked on both secular and church land. The *churchmen* were undoubtedly in a better position than the serfs since they were exempt from the *ikomodiya* the precise significance of which is not yet known today, and from all extraordinary tax contributions. They did not pay state taxes but, for that reason, had work and other obligations to their masters.

The leaders, either lords or other aristocrats, constituted a feudal class of their own. The majority of these aristocrats were in permanent residence at Samuel's court, were loyal to him and were, on the whole, satisfied with his policies. As soon as Samuel died, however, they began to turn once more exclusively towards their own individual interests, which led them into Basil's camp.

Slavery was of a patriarchal character. The slaves were sold outside the country or were liberated by purchase. It is known, for example, that Samuel enslaved the population of Larissa when he captured it.



Taxes were paid in kind. Everyone who owned a pair of oxen was obliged to donate a modium (peck) of wheat and millet, a pitcher of wine and certain other, unknown taxes.

The ruler's income came from the imperial land-holdings, from his livestock, from judicial fines and from military plunder. Samuel's treasury contained various valuables, gold and money.

The money which circulated in Samuel's empire was Byzantine since, as far as is known, he did not mint his own coins.

The army was made up of free and dependent peasants as well as inhabitants of the settled townships. This enormous army contained both infantry and cavalry. Its supreme commander was Samuel, who showed great ability as a strategist, taking part personally in many of the most fateful battles of the Byzantine Empire. Military dress was, on the whole, the same as that of the Byzantine troops: a short outer tunic, trousers and a shirt of steel. A helmet from which extension could be let down to below the chin and as far as the shoulder-blades was worn on the head. The soldiers used a shield, a long spear and, less frequently, a long-sword. Other accessories of the army were bugles and standards. In addition to this army, Samuel had his own bodyguard. He had no navy or warships.

In Samuel's empire various types of settlements existed: some proper towns (Skopje, Ohrid, Castoria and Verria), large number of places or towns which were ordinarily fortified with walls (Meglen, or Moglen), strongholds (Voden, Voler, Pernik, Prilep, Shtip, Prosek, Matsukion near Strumitsa, Melnik, Notiya or Notye near Meglen, Termitsa, Bisegradon, Setina, Stag, Servia and Sisko) and also thirty-five fortresses in the surroundings of Pernik. Commanders with various titles (katarchon, phylaton, phylax, archon and toparch) were in charge of all these towns and regions. There were also *stretegi*, known in the Slavonic language as "chelnitsi".

Samuel possessed a crown, secretaries and registers, which point to the existence of an imperial chancellory which issued documents (in Slavonic and in Greek). Samuel ratified his decrees with lead seals and perhaps also with gold and wax ones. Nothing definite can be said about the sort of judiciary that existed. Certainly, the supreme judge was the ruler himself. The commanders of Samuel's towns and districts exerted military and judicial as well as civil authority. The dignitaries of the church, as well as certain monasteries had legal authority over their own *serfs* and *churchmen*.

The official language of Samuel's empire was Slavonic although Greek was also used, as the language of diplomacy, at the imperial palace. As far as buildings are concerned, the Basilica of

St. Achilles, at Prespa, built by Samuel, was outstanding, as were Samuel's palaces and churches which were situated in the southern parts of his state.

### *The Creation of the Archbishopric of Ohrid*

The Archbishopric of Ohrid, known in historical literature as a patriarchate, was created during Samuel's reign. The seat of the Archbishopric was first at Prespa and later, when Samuel moved to Ohrid, the head of his church was transferred there too. Thus it was that Ohrid became, for the first and last time, both a church centre and the capital of an empire. As the Archbishop of Ohrid was not recognised by the Byzantine court it is most probable that he was invested by the Roman Curia, which had crowned Samuel and with which he had remained on good terms. The new archbishop had under his authority all those bishops who came within the bounds of Samuel's empire. Prominent among them were the following: Serdica (Sofia), Dristra, Moglen, Velbuzhd, Glavin, Belgrade, Naissus (Nish), Prizren, Lipljan, Rashka, Morozvzd, Bitola, Voden, Drama, Srbich, Verria, Strumitsa and Castoria. The Archbishopric of Dyrrachium and the newly-founded Archbishopric of Ragusa (Dubrovnik), to the foundation of which Samuel had given his consent, were not dependent upon the central Archbishopric of Ohrid.

The church was especially favoured in Samuel's empire. The clergy, and in particular the archbishops, enjoyed a privileged position.

### *The Decline and Fall of Samuel's Empire*

Samuel was succeeded by his son Gabriel Radomir. When Basil learned of the death of Samuel he first of all travelled to Salonika and then on to Polog, razing the imperial palace at Bitola in the course of this journey. His troops also took Prilep and Shtip. In the spring of 1015 the Emperor set out for Voden, whose citizens and garrison had risen against the Byzantines. He succeeded in capturing the town and removed its inhabitants to Voler. In Voden itself he established Byzantine lancers, renowned for their ferocity. Basil then sent his military commanders Nicephorus Ksiphij and Constantine Diogenes, the new Strategus of Salonika, to the Meglen region. The siege of this town lasted for a long time and Basil himself went there. The town was finally destroyed and among its

inhabitants who were captured were Ilitsa, the Commander of Meglen, and Dometian Kavkan, Gabriel's Counsellor. Those of the captured citizens who were capable of bearing arms were transferred to the armenian district Asprakhania, and the small nearby fortress of Notiya was fired.

In order to rid himself of Radomir, who, in spite of the defeats he had suffered, had penetrated deep into Byzantine territory, Basil succeeded in winning the support of John Vladislav, Radomir's nephew. Vladislav slew Radomir while they were out hunting on 15.X.1015. most probably at Petrisk, near Ostrovo. On his accession to the throne, John Vladislav vowed to be Basil's loyal vassal. Vladimir, who stood in his way, was enticed to Prespa and was there slain. The Archbishop David was a party to this despicable act. Vladislav, now in a stronger position, withdrew his obedience to Basil and set out a war against him. While the Byzantine military commanders were devastating in Pelagonia the Emperor himself was likewise engaged along the route to Ohrid and gave orders that all prisoners have their eyes taken out in order that maximum fear should prevail. As soon as he had captured Ohrid he prepared to leave for Dyrrachium but news reached him that Ivets, Vladislav's military commander, had completely routed his army in Pelagonia. Basil immediately set out against Ivets but, failing to achieve anything, returned first to Salonika and then to Mosynopolis.

Because of his engagement in the war against the Khazars in the Crimea, it was not until the middle of the following year, 1016, that Basil was able to renew his Balkan offensive. This time he made his way via Philippopolis to the district of Serdica and surrounded the fortified town of Pernik for a second time, after an interval of fourteen years. As he was once again unsuccessful he first returned to Mosynopolis and then, in the spring of 1017, entered southern Macedonia by way of Salonika. Sending David Arijanit and Constantine Diogenes to Pelagonia he himself set out for Castoria. It was at this stage that he received word that the Dux Krakras had allied himself with Vladislav and that the two of them, with a vast army to which the Pechenegs had attached themselves, intended to attack the Byzantine Empire. The Emperor immediately implemented a withdrawal at the same time capturing and razing several fortresses. When he arrived at the neighbourhood of Ostrovo, he learned that the Pechenegs had defected from Vladislav, who was already close to the stronghold of Setina, near Ostrovo. Basil captured Setina and at once sent out his elite detachments against Vladislav. At the head of these units he set Constantine Diogenes, who had just returned from firing Pelagonia. Diogenes, however, would certainly have suffered defeat if Basil himself had not come to his aid. A panic sprang up in the ranks of Vladislav's army and defeat

was inevitable. Not exploiting his victory to the full, Basil returned to Constantinople in January 1018.

Vladislav then went into the offensive, with the aim of taking possession of Vladimir's lands and of Dyrrachium, but was killed during the siege of that city. As soon as Basil learned of Vladislav's death and had received a letter from his commanders in which they offered him their allegiance, their fortresses and their regions, he set out on his ultimate conquest. First of all, in Adrianople, he met the brother and son of Krakras, who yielded Pernik and its thirty-five fortresses to him. In Mosynopolis he was met by a delegation who handed over Pelagonia, Morozvird and Liplyan. From there he proceeded to Serres, where Krakras himself awaited him, together with the commanders of the thirty-five fortresses and also Dragomuzh, the Commander of Strumitsa. Near Strumitsa the Emperor was met by the Archbishop David who delivered to him a letter from the Dowager Empress Maria. Here he also greeted the Toparcs Bogdan and then, in the neighbourhood of Skopje, the young Nikolitsa, Samuel's courageous military commander, surrendered to him. David Arijanit was appointed the Strategus of Skopje. From Skopje the Byzantine Emperor proceeded to Shtip and then Prosek and finally entered Ohrid, where Samuel's extremely rich treasury fell into his hands.

However Basil still had to break down the opposition offered him by several dignitaries: Fruzhin, Vladislav's eldest son, and the Dux Ivets and Nikolitsa. Fruzhin presently surrendered to the Emperor and, like all the others who had behaved in a similar way, received a pardon and a title. The Dux Ivets was encamped at South Prespa and was preparing an insurrection. The Byzantines, however, managed to capture him by deceit, took out his eyes and in this state brought him before the Emperor. He was then cast into prison. In the meantime Nikolitsa had been surrounded and, having no way out, was forced one night to yield to the Emperor who despatched him to imprisonment in Salonika. Thus it was that, towards the end of August 1018, the Emperor Basil succeeded in definitively crushing Samuel's state.



## MACEDONIA DURING THE PERIOD OF DEVELOPED FEUDALISM

### BYZANTINE RULE IN MACEDONIA

#### *The Establishment of Byzantine Military and Administrative Government*

Once he had conquered Mycedonia, Basil II made it a regular Byzantine province, consolidating in it the structure of military and administrative government. Its territory was split up into themes. At first, as long as the central government remained strong and was able to give them support, the administrators of the themes enjoyed considerable authority and ruled over ever-increasing territories. From the close of the twelfth century, however, the framework of the administrator's authority was restricted, very often being limited to the town which was the seat of the theme. Apart from this the administration of the Macedonian themes was constantly being retailored so that frequently several themes were united under the authority of a single administrator. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the major themes which included parts of Macedonia were those of Skopje, Salonika and Dyrrachium. Large armies were concentrated in them which intervened when necessary in a larger area than the themes themselves. Among the smaller themes in Macedonia were Ohrid, Pelagonia, Prespa, Castoria, Vardar, Strumitsa and Serres. The entire military, administrative, judicial and financial management lay in the hands of the administrators of the themes. They normally functioned with the aid of a vast official body imported en masse into subjugated Macedonia. The state officials were responsible for the collection of state taxes and for the maintenance of law and order. They also heaped up immense personal fortunes at the expense of the subordinated population.

### *The Rôle of the Archbishopric of Ohrid*

With the subjugation of Macedonia to Byzantium the Archbishopric of Ohrid was also subordinated to Byzantine authority. It was incorporated in the Patriarchate of Constantinople and retained only certain of its self-governing rights. From the point of view of organisation it was divided into thirty-two eparchies but towards the end of the eleventh century these had already been reduced to twenty-six. In addition to those on Macedonian territory, eparchies in the neighbouring states of Bulgaria, Serbia and Albania were also included in the Archbishopric. The supreme authorities of the Archbishopric were the Archbishop and the Church Synod. At the sitting of the Synod, which normally took place once a year, new bishops were elected and breaches of discipline on the part of the clergy were punished. Sitzings of the Synod were usually held in Ohrid, the seat of the Archbishopric. The Archbishop of Ohrid was no longer elected by the Synod, as had been the case before the establishment of Byzantine rule, but was appointed in Constantinople and his appointment was confirmed by the Emperor. He remained autocephalous as far as the churches under him were concerned but was subject to the Byzantine state and church authorities. He was a member of the principal administration of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, attended its sittings, defended the interests and prestige of the Eastern Church and participated in the resolution of disagreements with the Western Church.

The Emperor Basil II allowed the Archbishopric to retain certain of the privileges appertaining to the higher clergy and gained its support in strengthening Byzantine rule in the Province of Macedonia. It was even a Macedonian, John of Debar, who was left at the head of the Archbishopric. However after the death of Basil II, in 1025, his successors hastened to Hellenize the Archbishopric of Ohrid. In 1037 the Greek Leo replaced John of Debar. Henceforth the Archbishops of Ohrid and the bishops of the churches in the Archbishopric were regularly elected from the ranks of the Greek clergy. The lower clergy remained Slav and were much closer to the people.

When Ohrid came under Byzantine rule the Greek hierarchs began to eradicate all documents written in Slavonic and also the Slavonic Lives. Many manuscripts which had been preserved in Ohrid were to suffer during this period. In the churches the Slavonic Lives began to be preached in adaptations translated into Greek. The Slavonic names of rivers, towns, etc. were also replaced by either classical Greek or Roman ones. The Archbishopric of Ohrid, now become a Greek institution, made for the destruction of all those traditions which had been nurtured by the Macedonian

people. Slavonic literacy could not, however, be totally destroyed. Hellenism did not succeed in taking any deep roots among the people who everywhere continued to communicate in their native Slavonic language.

### *Accentuated Dissolution of Rural Communities and Growth of the Large Feud*

When Macedonia came under Byzantine rule the development of feudal relations was reinforced. Several different factors contributed to the massive dissolution of the free rural communities. An accentuated differentiation in respect of property-holding had come about among the members of the communities themselves. In addition to this, excessive recruitment for the Byzantine army from the ranks of the peasantry led to the destruction of the compact nature of the communities and this, in turn, made it easier for feudal lords to take them over. Not infrequently, particularly in the years when Macedonia had been penetrated and pillaged by various conquerors from outside, the peasants themselves had sought the protection of feudal lords and had adjoined their own small holdings to their feuds. Those lands which had remained for the common use of the members of the communities (meadows, woods, rivers, etc.) and also the properties of those who had been killed in the various wars were attractive to the feudal lords who were eager to take over more holdings. Another reason why the rural communities suffered dissolution was the increased monetary rents which the peasants were not in a position to meet and consequently fell into slavery, losing their holdings.

The church, with its ecclesiastical feudal lords who were also attempting to increase their holdings, played its part in the dissolution of the free rural communities. The Byzantine rulers gave numerous presentations to the church. In addition to this monastic properties were increased by means of the establishment of patronage over free rural communities which was a step in the direction of converting free peasants into feudally tied ones. This was also done in cases where peasants were sentenced for heresy, polygamy or unlawful marriage. Thus it was that the church was able to become a large-scale feudal property-owner. The monasteries of Macedonia had at their disposal large feudal holdings and a large tied population.

The growth of secular feudal property developed along similar lines to that of church and monastic holdings. Another way in which it grew was through *πρόνοια* (pronoia) or maintenance. The receivers of such maintenance were given peasant holdings, either

an entire village or several villages together with the inhabitants, as a life-long award by the central government. They in return undertook to look after military service, collecting from the ranks of the subordinated population the soldiers with whom they would go to war. A large number of such receivers of maintenance were given land-holdings in the richer Macedonian plains and in particular along the courses of the Rivers Vardar and Strymon.

There were native feudal lords in Macedonia as well as those who were of Greek, Armenian or other nationalities. Apart from those who had retained their old properties under the Byzantine government new Macedonian feudal lords arose from the communities themselves. The greater number of these sided with their people in the struggle against foreign overlordship.

In the eleventh and twelfth centuries the feudal lords most frequently enjoyed only limited and often only temporary financial, administrative and legal immunity. Cases of feudal lords who were allowed total immunity were rare as the central government was relatively strong and did not allow large-scale feudal lords independence during this period.

### *The Tied Feudal Population*

Serfs formed the basic category of the tied feudal population. They had retained their hereditary holdings but now the feudal lords had supreme authority over them. Another section of the tied population consisted of the *proskatimeni*, that is to say peasant who, as landless persons, were housed on feudal estates or had land set aside for them by the community. The position of the serf (*otrok*) was an unenviable one. His property was part of the personal demesne of the feudal lord and he was personally bound to his lord who could sell him together with his land. Next to this group came the slaves who, as distinct from classical slaves, gradually received holdings as well as certain rights from their feudal lords. Among the slaves were numbered those who were not in a position to meet the state taxes and also those who had risen against their exploiters or the state. The church men, who possessed their own land and enjoyed certain privileges which had been granted to the church, worked along with the serfs on the church lands. Artisans who were employed on feudal estates constituted a distinct category of the tied population.

### *The Deterioration of the Economic Situation of the People*

The Macedonian population was burdened with all the three varieties of feudal rent: work, kind and monetary. Insofar as it was in the name and the interest of the state the corvée or work rent involved the whole population while persons who were feudally tied were also obliged to work for their feudal lords. The proportion of this unpaid labour was not defined so that at times, particularly in the summer months, it could occupy several of the days of the week. The hardest corvée was the repairing of fortresses or the building of new ones. In addition to this the people were obliged to construct roads and bridges, build boats and bake bread for the army. The rent in kind was also varied where it consisted of giving finished products to the state and to the feudal lords. The customary practice of giving gifts to officials was a particularly heavy burden on the population. Taxes in kind were also exacted by the lords spiritual. The Ohrid Church, according to its established canon, exacted this sort of tax from the whole population, including the Vlachs and the Vardariot Turks. Monetary rent was also on a large scale during this period. When the tax reform of 1040 was put into effect the regular state taxes began to be collected in money form. With the ever more frequent conversion of rent in kind into monetary rent a strong stimulus was given to the development of goods and money relations. This meant the start of a new and higher stage in the development of feudalism. The transition to more highly developed feudal relations affected the peasant population in Macedonia most of all. The feudal lords were given the right to collect the state taxes, as well as their own, which afforded them the opportunity of loading the peasants with tax burdens even greater than those prescribed by law.

Apart from its regular taxes, the Macedonian population had to pay various supplementary taxes, such as the judicial fines which were levied on entire villages, the amount being determined according to the degree of damage done by the villagers. There were various other taxes, such as those for crossing rivers, for fishing or for using water-mills and the marriage tax. As marriage tax bishops exacted a gold piece from the bridegroom and twelve ells of linen from the bride.

Certain of the tax contributions were gathered arbitrarily, according to tradition, and were registered as taxes. In addition to all this there were numerous abuses perpetrated by officialdom and by the lessees of the taxes.

## THE STRUGGLE AGAINST BYZANTINE RULE

### *Peter Delyan's Revolt*

Opposition on the part of the Macedonian people to Byzantine overlordship and to increased feudal exploitation had begun to appear in the first years after the fall of Samuel's empire. In 1040 it developed into an armed rebellion, led by Peter Delyan, Gabriel Radomir's son by his first wife, the daughter of the Hungarian king. When it began in the regions of Belgrade and Morava, which bordered on Hungary, the rebellion was most certainly encouraged and supported by the Hungarian king. Proclaiming Peter Delyan as their emperor, the rebellious army which had assembled near Belgrade set out for Naissus and Skopje and was met and augmented by supporters everywhere. With the assistance of the local population the rebels soon took Skopje. Only then did the Byzantines fully grasp the seriousness of the situation and the Emperor sent out an army against the rebels. It, however, defected, rebelling and proclaiming the soldier Tihomir emperor. Thus two centres of revolt existed, which threatened to spilt the uprising. But Tihomir was very soon killed so that the entire authority passed into Delyan's hands.

Delyan then extended his military actions. He sent a number of his troops to Dyrrhachium who, supported by the population, took the theme of Dyrrhachium. With Peter at its head the greater part of the army set out for Salonika. The Byzantine Emperor Michael IV was surprised there while convalescing but managed to escape to Constantinople leaving behind Manuel Ivets. He, however, joined forces with the rebels. Exploiting the panic which had arisen in the ranks of the Byzantine army Delyan sent out armies in several directions. One of them, led by Anthimus made its way deep into the south reaching as far as the town of Tiva. The revolt spread to Epirus where the entire theme of Naupactos, with the exception of Naupactos itself, went over to Delyan. Encouraged by these successes, he prepared to attack Salonika. At the same time he took Demetrias (the present-day town of Volos, in Thessaly) and also, according to the reports of Kekavmen, Serdica (Sofia). With the spread of the revolt to central Greece, Albania, Serbia and Bulgaria wide territories came under Delyan's rule.

Faced with the dissatisfaction which had arisen in the higher circles of Byzantium because of the insurrection, the Emperor decided to set out for Macedonia on a campaign. In the meantime events had taken place which facilitated the Emperor's task of put-

ting down the rebellion. These were caused by Aleutian, John Vladislav's second son, who was a patrician and the Strategus of Theodosiopolis, in Armenia. He fled from there and joined in insurgents in Macedonia towards the end of 1040 or at the beginning of the following year. Peter Delyan accepted Aleutian's services, put him at the head of forty thousand soldiers and sent him to Salonika. The Byzantine army sallied forth unexpectedly from the city and routed Aleutian, who lost about fifteen thousand men. This defeat led to discord in the ranks of the rebels. Aleutian managed to blind Delyan and then escaped to the Byzantine Emperor. Thus bereft of its leader the insurrection was condemned to failure. In the spring or summer of 1041 the Emperor went first to Salonika and then set out for the centre of the revolt at Ostrovo. There he captured the blinded Delyan, despatched him to Salonika and set out himself for the Macedonian interior. He met with resistance in the Prilep region from the troops of Manuel Ivets. But he, too, was soon captured. When he had utterly quelled the revolt the Emperor returned in triumph to Constantinople taking both Delyan and Ivets with him.

This rebellion was to have grave consequences. The Byzantine army, which contained the Norwegian mercenaries of the military commander Harold Hardrada, devastated Macedonia. The population was to a large extent enslaved. New state officials and feudal lords were introduced who, together with the army, lay heavy on the backs of the peasantry. As a result of such oppression resistance arose once more. In 1066 the Vlach population in Thessaly rose in revolt. The leadership of the insurrection was entrusted to Nikulitsa Delphin, the Governor of Larissa, whose grandfather Nikulitsa had governed the town during Samuel's reign. Nikulitsa, however, had no great interest in a successful outcome to the uprising. The revolt did not succeed in spreading and only involved the towns of Larissa, Trikkala and Pharsala and the fortress of Cythros. The Emperor Constantine X Ducas (1059-1067) did not permit the rebels to penetrate the Macedonian interior. With Nikulitsa's aid he managed to put down the rebellion in 1066, the same year in which it had broken out.

### *The Revolt of George Voyteh*

In 1072 a further revolt, led by George Voyteh, took place in Macedonia. It was provoked by dissatisfaction with the new course taken by Byzantine financial policy. Skopje was the centre of the rebellion. The leaders of the revolt sought aid from the ruler of Zeta, Michael (1052-81) who was related to Samuel's imperial line. Michael sent his son Constantine Bodin together with three hun-

dred picked men. Led by Voyteh, the insurgents met Bodin at Prizren and proclaimed him emperor, renaming him Peter in honour of Peter Delyan.

The previous Dux, or Governor, of Skopje Nicephorus Carantenus set out to meet the rebels and was joined by Damian Dassenus, the newly-appointed Dux of Skopje. In the ensuing battle, near Prizren, the Byzantine army was defeated, the new Skopje Dux being among those taken prisoner. Bodin then divided the insurgent army in two and at the head of one half set out for Naisus. The command of the other half was entrusted to Petrilo who was sent into the interior of Macedonia. Voyteh was already in Skopje when Petrilo set out for Ohrid. The townspeople of Ohrid greeted him as their liberator. Devol surrendered to him without a struggle. The Strategi of these two towns, together with many others, among them those Macedonian feudal lords who were of a pro-Byzantine inclination, fled to the fortified town of Castoria. There, together with the Dux of Castoria, they made preparations to meet a rebel attack on the town. Petrilo set out for Castoria but met with strong resistance. The united Byzantine troops sallied forth from the town and inflicted a powerful defeat on the insurgents. Petrilo himself managed to escape to his lord Michael in Zeta.

Bodin drove the Byzantines out of the Naissus region but the defeat at Castoria and the ensuing Byzantine offensive halted the victorious movements of his troops.

The Byzantine army, led by Michael Saronit, set out first of all for Skopje. Terrified by the size of the army, Voyteh accepted the proposal that he should hand over the town without a struggle but at the same time summoned Bodin to his aid. Informed of this Saronit intercepted and defeated Bodin at Kossovo Polye. Bodin was captured and sent to Constantinople along with Voyteh who had already been taken prisoner. Voyteh died on the journey as a result of brutal torture. Bodin was imprisoned in Constantinople but later, on the intervention of the Venetian mercenaries, returned to Zeta.

In 1073 fresh Byzantine forces were despatched to Macedonia with the aim of eliminating those isolated points of rebellion which had continued to offer resistance. It was at this time that the imperial palace at Prespa was destroyed and the church there looted. Nevertheless resistance continued and a further large army had to be sent to Macedonia with the Dux Nicephorus Uranus at its head. Burning and razing wherever he met with opposition, Uranus succeeded definitively in putting down the insurrection by the end of 1073.

### *A New Upsurge of the Bogomil Movement*

The Bogomil movement became particularly powerful at the end of the eleventh century and even more in the course of the twelfth century as a characteristic and mass expression of class warfare. The struggle of the Bogomils was directed equally against the feudal lords and the Byzantine Emperor with his spiritual and ecclesiastical officials.

Archbishop Theophylact of Ohrid waged a fierce war against the Bogomils whose activity in the area of Ohrid was particularly energetic towards the end of the eleventh century. Yet, in spite of severe punishment, he did not succeed in stamping out the Bogomil movement which held ever-increasing attractions for the broad masses of the feudally tied population. The priest Basil headed the movement and together with his apostles and women preachers spread Bogomilism throughout all the regions of the Empire, even to Constantinople itself.

Confronted with the rapid spread of Bogomilism the Emperor Alexius I Comnenus decided to intervene personally. At the same time his actions were directed against the Paulician movement which also existed on a large scale in the Balkans. The leaders of the Bogomil movement, with Basil at their head, were captured, condemned at the Synod of 1111 in Constantinople and subsequently put to death. The Bogomil and Paulician movement did not, however, collapse but rather experienced a revival after the death of Alexius I Comnenus (1118) so that by the end of the twelfth century they had come to affect all the regions of Macedonia.

### INCURSIONS OF THE NORMANS, SERBS AND CRUSADERS INTO MACEDONIA

#### *Norman Occupation*

At the beginning of the ninth decade of the eleventh century the Normans, led by Robert Guiscard and his son Bohemond, attacked the territory of Byzantium. In 1072 they won a resounding victory near Dyrrachium and in the following year another close to Ioannina. This opened the way to the extension of their rule throughout several regions of the Balkans including a large part of Macedonia. Bohemond took Ohrid, the military commander Peter

Alif took the two Pologs and the Count Pundes took Skopje. From Ohrid Bohemond made his way to Verria (Berroea) and then continued to Meglen where he renewed the destroyed fortress. He left the Count Saracin in command there while he himself proceeded to the River Vardar, reaching Beli Trskvi where he remained for three months. He then took Pelagonia, Trikkala and Castoria. He also attempted to take Larissa but suffered a defeat in January 1084.

Making use of the temporary absence of Bohemond, who had gone to Italy for money to pay his troops, the Emperor Alexius I attacked and captured Castoria. Shortly afterwards in 1085 Robert Guiscard died and Bohemond was forced to retreat from the Balkans, among other reasons because of a mutiny among his military leaders.

The Norman conquest had serious consequences for Macedonia. The looting carried out by the Normans was followed by the cruelty inflicted by the Byzantine troops sent to impose order on the province.

#### *Serbian Occupations and Conquests*

The withdrawal of the Normans did not bring peace to the Byzantine Empire. Bodin, who succeeded his father to the throne of Zeta in 1081, seized Mokra – part of the Ohrid district including Mt. Bagora in the vicinity of the Ohrid Mountains. He also took the district of Dyrrachium for a time but presently concluded a peace treaty with Alexius I Comnenus and retreated. Before long, however, Bodin attacked the Ohrid region once again, occasioning a number of encounters between his army and that of Byzantium.

At the end of the ninth decade Vukan, the ruler of Rashka, attacked Skopje. This caused the Emperor to intervene personally and undertake three campaigns against Rashka (1091, 1093, and 1094). These intervention enabled the Byzantine Empire to retain its positions in Macedonia.

#### *Incursions by Crusaders from the First Crusade*

In 1096 and 1097 Crusaders from the First Crusade, traveling along the Via Egnatia, entered Macedonia. The passage of the Crusaders and their sojourn had grave effects on the Macedonian population. The Crusaders of Bohemond of Taranto who arrived in 1096 were particularly fearsome. They did not refrain from using force when it came to providing themselves with food and

other necessities. Remaining in Castoria for several days they seized oxen, mules and everything else that they could lay their hands on. In the region between Prilep and Bitola they destroyed a fortified settlement together with its inhabitants. While crossing the River Vardar the Crusaders were attacked by Turks and Pechenegs in the service of the Byzantine army but, undefeated, they continued their journey to Serres. There great honours and rich gifts which the Byzantines had collected from the local inhabitants were bestowed on them. The Crusaders then continued on their way to Asia Minor.

In 1097 Crusaders from the South of France, led by Count Raymond of Toulouse and Bishop Adhemar of Puy, passed through Macedonia. Encountering ambushes prepared by the Byzantine army with the help of the local population they were forced to leave Macedonia speedily.

#### *Further Norman Occupation*

At the beginning of the twelfth century Byzantine possessions on the Balkans were once again threatened by Bohemond. In autumn 1107 with an army of forty-five thousand carried on two hundred transport ships and thirty men-of-war Bohemond disembarked near Avlona which he took with little difficulty. The army then set out for Dyrrachium which, despite a number of attacks, remained in Byzantine hands. Bohemond took several neighbouring fortresses including Arbanon and Debar. This time, however, the Byzantine forces, led by the Emperor himself, were much more solidly organised. Bohemond was soon compelled to seek a peace treaty which was concluded in the Emperor's camp at the River Devol. The Treaty of Devol of 1108 marked the end of Bohemond of Taranto's career and he withdrew to Italy where he died in 1111.

### THE INDEPENDENT FEUDAL RULERS OF PROSEK

#### *Byzantine Rule in Macedonia*

Shortly after the death of Manuel I Comnenus (1143-1180) the weaknesses of Byzantine society became so marked that the state found itself on the verge of collapse. Apart from increased feudal exploitation, lack of respect for the law and the abuses perpetrated by the feudal lords and official bodies, the main danger to

the stability of the state came from the phenomenon of the mass defection of aristocrats from the central government. Usurpation of authority was regularly followed by armed clashes, banishment and harsh punishments. At the same time the imperial palace had become a hotbed of all sorts of political groupings and intrigues. This, the continual changes on the throne and the bloody settlements of accounts greatly reduced the authority of the central government. The attempt of Andronicus I Comnenus (1183-1185) to impose order on the situation and restrict the capricious obduracy of the great landowners produced no lasting results, mainly because of the tough resistance of the feudal opposition.

External factors rendered the internal situation even more complex. The Normans once again threw themselves against the Balkan Peninsula. Disembarking this time in the region of Dyrrachium they made for Salonika and, proving invincible, reached the city in August 1185. There they gained rich booty and shortly afterwards set out for Serres and Mosynopolis. Under pressure from the Normans Byzantine rule collapsed in the greater part of Macedonia as well as in the peripheral regions of the state.

#### *Dobromir Hrs*

The early years of the rule of Isaac II Angelus (1185-1195) saw the newly developed feudal powers in Serbia and Bulgaria establish themselves as a significant political factor in the Balkans. This and the entry of the Normans into Salonika created favourable conditions for an increase of independence on the part of certain of the Slav feudal lords. Among these was Dobromir Hrs whose activity was linked to the uprising of Peter and Asen in Bulgaria. At the outset Hrs had under him a body of five hundred armed men and maintained peaceful relations with the court in Constantinople. He was, however, preparing to extend his authority, making use of the situation created in 1189 by the incursion of Crusaders from the Third Crusade led by Frederic I Barbarossa. Some of the Crusaders had left the main route and entered Macedonia. In Gradets they killed many people and fired several buildings, including the church. Descending to Vkahija (most probably in the region of Strumitsa) they came into conflict with reputed rebels and took a great deal of rich booty. Here it would appear the Crusaders made contact with Hrs and conducted negotiations with him.

Byzantium's engagement with the Crusaders was also exploited by other of its adversaries, including Rascia. The Grand Zhupan Nemanya attacked the region along the upper courses of the Rivers Strymon and Vardar. But after the departure of the Crusaders for Asia Minor Byzantium succeeded in imposing its supreme

authority upon its disobedient vassals. At this time Dobromir Hrs was imprisoned but not long afterwards he was established as governor of Strumitsa. When unrest broke out in the Western Provinces of the Empire during the early years of the reign of Alexius III Angelus (1195-1203) Dobromir Hrs once again declared his independence, first in Strumitsa itself and then taking over Prosek, a naturally fortified town with a unique position. Hrs immediately established a picked garrison in Prosek, transferred his seat there and equipped the town with defensive weapon and an adequate store of food. He repealed the laws of the Romaioi and introduced 'barbarian' rule in the territory he had conquered. From there he went on to attack Serres. In 1199 the Byzantine Emperor himself led an expedition against Hrs but the Byzantine army suffered defeat below the walls of the fortified city. The Prosek garrison, using catapults skilfully operated by an ex-Byzantine mercenary, inflicted severe losses on the enemy. In the course of the fighting Hrs's soldiers carried out a night attack and destroyed the Byzantine siege equipment. After this failure the Byzantine Emperor was forced to come to terms and recognise Hrs's rule over the towns of Strumitsa and Prosek. A marriage was then contracted between Hrs and the daughter of the Protostrator Manuel Kamits.

After a short time relations between Prosek and Constantinople once more deteriorated. The cause of this was the Emperor's refusal to pay the ransom for Hrs's father-in-law who had been languishing for some time in Bulgarian captivity. Kamits was freed, however, on the intervention of his son-in-law who paid two hundred centenarii in gold as ransom. Kamits joined Hrs and compensation for the money paid in ransom was sought from the Emperor who refused the request. The Protostrator, together with Hrs, took military action in the Western Provinces. They first took Pelagonia and Prilep, then entered Thessaly and sparked off an uprising in Hellas, contributing to the defection of the Peloponnese from the central government. In the meantime an army had been fitted out and despatched against the Protostrator. The Byzantine troops first of all took Pelagonia and Prilep and then Thessaly, thus breaking Kamits's forces. In 1201 the Byzantines also gained the overlordship of Strumitsa, by way of a trick. Hrs was now forced into isolation in Prosek and all trace of him was lost thereafter. Bulgarian rule was established in Prosek in 1203.

#### *The Kingdom of Salonika*

In 1204 the Crusaders of the Fourth Crusade attacked Constantinople. It was unable to withstand them and the Byzantine state collapsed, its territory being taken in part by Vasilias and in part by



the Crusaders. The Crusaders formed the Kingdom of Salonika in part of Macedonia with Boniface of Montferrat at its head. In their seizure of Macedonia they took over large quantities of grain supplies, livestock and other wealth and established their own garrisons in certain towns. At this period some Macedonian towns (Skopje, Ohrid, and Berroea) came under the Bulgarian Empire. The influence of the Catholic Church spread in Macedonia at this time.

After the defeat of the Latin Emperor Baldwin and the other Crusaders near Adrianople, on 14th April 1205, the Bulgarian army attacked and destroyed the town of Serres and entered the district of Salonika. Bulgarian pressure on Salonika increased in 1207, particularly after the death of Boniface of Montferrat. The Bulgarian Emperor Kaloyan laid siege to the city but died below its walls and the siege was abandoned.

### *The Rule of Strez*

In the period after Kaloyan's death, when a struggle for power was raging in Bulgaria, Strez, who was a descendant of the Bulgarian royal line, established his position in an area of Macedonian territory. With the aid of Serbia he set himself up in Prosek and extended his rule to Salonika and Ohrid. The Bulgarian governors of these territories swore obedience to him. In the meantime pressure from Bulgaria had lessened and Strez established good relations with that state. He then began a war against the Kingdom of Salonika. This resulted in a large-scale conflict in Pelagonia in 1212, in which the Latins were supported by Epirus and the forces of Prosek by Bulgaria. Losing the battle, Strez broke off his relations with Serbia and joined the alliance of the Balkan powers of the Latin Kingdom, Bulgaria and the Despotate of Epirus. In 1214, just at the time when preparations were being made for an attack on Serbia, Strez died unexpectedly, perhaps a victim of the dissatisfied nobles.

### *The Struggle of the Neighbouring States for Supremacy in Macedonia*

After the death of Strez an area of Macedonia including Skopje and Ohrid fell under the rule of the Despotate of Epirus which had grown during the years of the Latin invasion. Salonika too was taken by the army of Epirus in 1244. Immediately afterwards Demetrius Chomatianus, Archbishop of Ohrid, crowned as Emperor the Despot Theodore Angelus Ducas Comnenius, who

had clear pretensions to renewing the Byzantine Empire. After its defeat by the Bulgarians in 1230, near Klokotnitsa, Epirus fell out of the competitive struggle to succeed Byzantium. Bulgaria increased its reputation and prestige perceptibly, expanding into Thrace, Macedonia and a part of Albania. At this stage the constitution of the administration and also that of the church organisation in Macedonia were altered. Bulgarian governors were appointed and garrisons housed in Macedonian towns, and the Greek bishops of the eparchies were replaced by archpriests of the Trnovo Church, which became a Patriarchate in 1235. The significance of the Archbishopric of Ohrid, which had already had its jurisdiction restricted when the Serbian Church became autocephalous in 1219, was further reduced.

Exploiting Bulgarian involvement in internal struggles and in combatting Mongol pressure, the Nicaean army took the greater part of Eastern Macedonia and, in 1246, Salonika too fell under Nicaean rule. Western Macedonia became the scene of a long-drawn-out struggle among interested Balkan powers. The towns of Skopje and Veles changed hands particularly frequently.

## SERBIAN RULE IN MACEDONIA

### *Expansion and Strengthening of Serbian Rule*

The Byzantine Empire was renewed in 1261 after Constantinople had crushed the Latins. For almost two decades after this Byzantium ruled over Macedonia with no external harassments. In 1282, however, the Serbian feudal army of King Stephen Urosh II Milutin entered Northern Macedonia and took Lower and Upper Polog, Skopje, Ovche Pole, Zletovo and Piyanets. Shortly afterwards Poreche and the Kichevo and Debar regions were also incorporated into Serbia. Somewhat later a Serbian detachment, following the lower course of the River Strymon, reached as far as Christopolis (Krstopol). After four decades, which were spent in the strengthening of its rule in the captured territories, Serbia attacked Byzantium once more. This time the towns of Shtip and Chreshche on the River Bragalnitsa and Veles and Prosek on the Vardar came under the rule of the Serbian King Stephen Urosh III Dechanski. After the capture of Prosek in 1328 the Serbian army entered the regions of Demir Hisar and Debarska, thus approaching Ohrid which was an important stronghold of Byzantine rule in the Western Provinces of the Empire. Because of this the By-



zantine Emperor Andronicus III Palaeologus (1328-1341) set out towards the threatened regions in 1330 taking the towns in the Demir Hisar and Debartsa regions, including Siderocastron (Zheleznets). Four years later, under the leadership of their new ruler Stephen Urosh IV Dushan, the Serbs continued their conquest of the Macedonian towns. With the capture of Serres in 1345 Serbian rule extended over virtually the whole of Macedonia. The same year the Serbian ruler Stephen Urosh IV Dushan was proclaimed Emperor of the Serbs and the Greeks. The Serbian Archbishopric was then raised to the rank of a Patriarchate. The coronation of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan as Emperor took place in Skopje on 16th April 1346 and his Law Code was brought to Skopje in 1349. Byzantium had no wish to recognise Serbia's political gains and Stephen Urosh IV Dushan and the Serbian Patriarchate were anathematized by Patriarch Callistus I of Constantinople, most probably in 1350.

In the course of 1346 Serbian rule expanded to include Thessaly and Epirus but, in 1350, the towns of Serres and Voden (Edessa) severed their links with the Serbian Empire. Opposition to Serbian rule was noted even in Skopje. Serbia was obviously having grave difficulties in settling the situation in the newly conquered territories.

#### *Position of Macedonia in the Serbian State*

During this period of Serbian rule Macedonia was divided into Zhupi. The administrative personal were usually given Greek titles. The feudal ruling class was predominantly Serbian but there were also Greek and other feudal lords. Each town was governed by a *κεφαλή*, or governor. Governors had the authority to enchain and imprison, to judge and collect taxes at fairs.

The nobility and the higher clergy gathered together at assemblies to resolve important matters of domestic and foreign policy. During the reign of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan certain of these assemblies were held in Macedonia (at Skopje, Sopotnitsa and Krupishte).

The Archbishop of Ohrid retained its elevated rank in the Serbian state. He took part in the proclamation of the Serbian Patriarchate, the coronation of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan and the work of the state assemblies. Greek church dignitaries were relieved of their duties and Serbian archpriests established in their stead. During the reign of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan the Bishopric of Morozvzd was abandoned and in its place the Bishopric of Zletovo, with its seat at the monastery of Lesnovo, was formed.

In the fifth decade of the fourteenth century Serbian influence increased in the monastic communities on Mount Athos. Serbs were in control of the Protat of Mount Athos. The monasteries there supported Stephen Urosh IV Dushan and he endowed them richly in return.

The Bogomil movement was quite widespread in the fourteenth century, penetrating even to Mount Athos. The Law Code of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan prescribed harsh punishments for those who preached and propagated the Bogomil teaching.

### MACEDONIA'S INDEPENDENCE AND ITS FALL UNDER TURKISH RULE

#### *Decline of the Empire of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan and Independence of Macedonia*

After the death in 1355 of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan the central government's authority swiftly declined and the great feudal lords ruled in complete independence. During this period there were several courts and autocrats in Macedonia. Right up to his death in 1371 Stephen Urosh V, the son of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan, bore the title of Emperor, but it was largely a nominal one. Helena, wife of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan governed the town of Serres and its surroundings up to 1365. Thereafter the Serres region and Drama were ruled by John Uglesha. Before him the Caesar Voihna had ruled in Drama. At that time the Dux Hlapon was ruler of Berroea and Voden. The Despot Oliver held the territory of the middle course of the River Bregalnitsa including Zletovo, Morozvzd and Pijanets. The Sebastocrator Vlatko ruled the region of the upper course of the River Kriva, including Slavishte.

The most notable feudal lords on Macedonian territory at this time were the brothers Volkashin and Uglesha. Volkashin had himself proclaimed King in 1365. As co-ruler with the Emperor Urosh he wielded great authority in the country. In 1366 representatives of Emperor and the King appeared in Dubrovnik. At that time they minted money jointly. John Uglesha was also the leader of a state community independent of the Empire. After 1365 Uglesha, who up till then had been a Grand Duke, began to bear the title of Despot. With an eye to the conditions under which he ruled he respected Byzantine institutions and the Greek language and attempted a reconciliation with the Greek Church. In 1368 he

issued a Decree of Reconciliation and condemned the proclamation of the Serbian Archbishopric as a Patriarchate.

### *The Osmanli Conquest of Macedonia*

Towards the middle of the fourteenth century the newly created state of the Osmanli Turks in Asia Minor was threatening the Balkan states. In 1352 they took the fortress of Tzympe, on the Gallipoli Peninsula and two years later, following a great earthquake, they took the fortress of Gallipoli, thus creating a convenient bridgehead for their forthcoming penetration of the Balkans.

The rule of Uglesha was among the first to be threatened by the Turkish forces. Confronted with the danger he persuaded Volkashin to take joint action with him against the Turks. Hostilities broke out on 26th September 1371 (old style) near Chernomen on the River Maritsa. The fighting ended in victory for the Turks. Among the numerous victims were the brothers Volkashin and Uglesha. The outcome of the battle was of catastrophic significance for Macedonia. The Serres region and Chalcidice were captured by the Despot Manuel Palaeologus. Volkashin's son Marko retained the title of King but recognised Turkish supreme authority and committed himself to paying tribute and rendering military aid. At this time the brothers Dragash, rulers of Eastern Macedonia with their seat at Velbuzhd, became Turkish vassals while Vuk Brankovich extended his rule to include Skopje and the Grand Zhupan Andrea Gropa strengthened his position in Ohrid.

After the Battle of Maritsa the Turkish army made systematic appearances throughout Macedonia. In 1383 the town of Serres fell into Turkish hands and not long afterwards, most probably in 1385, the towns of Shtip, Veles, Prilep and Bitola were taken. The Turks temporarily occupied Salonika in 1387. In 1392 they took Skopje. Shortly afterwards, in 1395, King Marko and Constantine Dragash were killed, fighting on the side of the Turks against the Vlach army at the Battle of Rovine and their lands came under direct and lasting Turkish rule.

## MACEDONIAN ECONOMY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN THE THIRTEENTH AND FOURTEENTH CENTURIES

### *Economy*

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Macedonian economy was predominantly agrarian. Agriculture was its most developed branch. Among the grain cultures that were sown were wheat, barley, rye and oats. Sheepbreeding and viniculture were particularly advanced in the monasteries. The provision of suitable conditions led to the development of fishing as a significant economic activity. Fishponds were used by feudal lords and especially by the monasteries. Bee-keeping also developed on a large scale. Animal husbandry was an important branch of the economy and among the large and small livestock reared were cows, oxen, horses, sheep, goats and pigs.

During this period several mines were operative in Macedonia: at Trnovets (near Stratsin, on the River Kriva), at Zletovo and at Siderokavasia (on Chalcidice). The mine at Trnovets was monastic property and was worked by the monastery's dependents. It appears that mining extended to other areas as well, including Demir Hisar, Samokov, Kochishta, Sasa and Shlegovo. The mines and smelting works obtained the necessary wood from nearby forests. The forests also met the needs of craftsmen and households and provided hunting-grounds for wild boar, deer and various fowl.

Craftsmanship was poorly developed and remained under the control of feudal lords. The goldsmith's craft was an urban occupation while smiths, wool-carders, tailors, saddlers, potters, millers, roller operators, ploughwrights and bricklayers all worked on feudal estates. The craftsmen's main occupation was usually agriculture but there were some full-time craftsmen who worked exclusively at their own crafts and paid a certain tax in order to do so.

Trade and the exchange of products took place in the mining settlements, on monastic estates and in towns. Fairs, held near certain churches and monasteries, contributed greatly to the advancement of trade and commerce. At the fair the *κεφαλή*, or governor, collected dues, although sometimes this right belonged to bishops or monasteries. The central government was responsible for foreign trade. In 1199 Byzantium confirmed Venetian trading privileges over an extensive area which included almost all the regions of Macedonia. After the Battle of Klokotnitsa, in 1230, the Bulgarian ruler John Asen II granted the citizens of Dubrovnik freedom of passage and the right to trade in the regions of Skopje, Prilep

and Devol as well as in Salonika. the situation remained unaltered during the period of Serbian rule in Macedonia.

The settlement of craftsmen and traders in some towns contributed to their expansion. Peripheral settlements of a suburban nature grew up in the towns which lay close to important communication routes or on the banks of rivers, lakes or the Aegean Sea. The large majority of towns, however, remained agrarian settlements. Salonika and Serres were more advanced, possessing many craft workshops. Some of the towns of this period have vanished in the course of time and even their location is unknown today (Polog, Prespa and Molsko). The palaces of feudal lords, churches and economic institutions were situated in the central areas of the towns. The lower parts of civic towers were used as prisons. The towns possessed their own garrisons for the upkeep of which the population of the towns and their surroundings were responsible. The suburbs were usually protected by walls and inhabited predominantly by the feudally dependent population. Towns were interconnected by roads designed for horse and cart traffic. A service was organised for the provision of security on the roads, particularly where they passed through gorges. The guard was normally formed from the population living in the neighbourhood of the roads.

### *Social Structure*

The feudal structure of society did not undergo any essential changes in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. The land, in the main, was divided among secular and ecclesiastical feudal lords with the ruler at their head. During this period church possessions reached the peak of their development. The monastery of Chilandar had at its disposal eighty villages or hamlets, 'Gorga' near Skopje had forty-seven, Treskavets near Prilep thirty-seven and the Manichean monastery near Serres possessed about five hundred and forty-seven hectares of cultivated fields and about fifty-four hectares of vineyards. Monastic estates contained cultivated fields, meadows, pastures, vineyards, vegetable gardens, livestock, hunting-grounds, forests and workshops. Monastic property was privileged in that it was virtually exempt from taxes and from forced labour. A work force consisting of the various types of serfs in the tied population was used on church property.

Serfs possessed personal, heritable property, called *stas*, which could be sold or given away but the extent of this property was very limited.

In certain districts of Macedonia social differentiation within the ranks of the peasantry was appearing in the fourteenth century.

A group of wealthy peasants was being formed while at the same time the number of the *ελεύθεροι*, or landless peasant freemen was on the increase.

The obligation to their feudal lords of the *meropsi* serfs, who were tied to the land, was determined by a law in which the land was the basis of the standardisation of duties. These consisted of forced labour on feudal estates for a regulated number of days in the week or year. The level of tax contributions altered with the course of time. Apart from these the tied population had various other duties, including the guarding of towns, provision of board and lodgings for travelers and the donation of offerings at the great Christian festivals. In the second half of the fourteenth century the monastery of Chilandar collected the feudal rents from estates in the Strumitsa region in money form.

The Vlachs occupied a special place in the thirteenth and fourteenth century Macedonian social structure. They were scattered everywhere but the greatest concentration was in Southern Macedonia. Living in nomadic encampments of from thirty to a hundred persons, they were mostly engaged in animal husbandry. In its attempts to conserve the social groups the Serbian state forbade intermarriage between Vlachs and the *meropsi* serfs who were tied to the land. The Vlachs too paid regulated taxes and had forced work obligations to the feudal lords and the state.

Priests normally possessed their own *bashtina* (father-land) and inherited three cultivated fields apiece. Only one of the sons of a priest, in so far as he had studied book-learning, could inherit the status of clergyman. The other sons became dependant peasant, either *meropsi* or *sokalnitsi*. The situation of the sons of craftsmen was similar. In the fourteenth century property differentiation arose among the craftsmen. There were master-builders, for example, who received properties or whole villages as a reward for their services in the construction of a church.

The *otrotsi* serfs came right at the bottom of feudal society, although in the course of the fourteenth century they gradually came closer to the *πάρουκοι* serfs, who were tenant peasants possessing a pair of oxen.

The majority of the monasteries in Macedonia were communities with a developed hierarchy, an independent rule and courts and the apparatus to enforce their decisions. They were usually constructed in the form of strongholds and surrounded with defensive walls and towers. Because of their considerable privileges and the numerous work force they had at their disposal, the monasteries were exemplary estates on which even irrigation channels could be found.

## THE CULTURAL SITUATION UP TO THE END OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY

### *Literature*

Several generations of Slav writers were followed by a period of activity by anonymous copyists. They copied out theological texts, the works of Clement of Ohrid, of Constantine the Presbyter and Trsnorizets Hrabar. Various collections of the sermons of Orthodox preachers of the Christian church, anthologies of Christian poetry, romances and fables were also written and copied. This work was carried on in several important copyist centres – Ohrid, Mount Athos, Lesnovo and on Skopje Tsrna Gora – as well as at other smaller centres which operated in the numerous monasteries of Macedonia. There is no outstanding literary figure from this period although some of the copyists left behind them a number of copied manuscripts.

Among the documents of Slav literacy written in Macedonia from the twelfth to the end of the fourteenth century are: The Dobromir Gospels, The Ohrid Epistles and The Bitola Triodion (a liturgical book containing the Lent Office) from the twelfth century; The Grigirovich Paremnik, and The Slepche Epistles from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and the fragment of an Octoechus (a liturgical book of the eight modes), Pope John's Gospels, The Dobreysha Gospels, The Vranesh Epistles, The Bologna Psalter and The Radomir Gospels from the thirteenth century.

Like other Slav literatures of the period, mediaeval Macedonian literature possesses a large number of hagiographies which popularised the Christian belief and the persons of the saints. In addition to those of a general character, like the Life of Alexius the Man of God and the Life of St. George, mediaeval Macedonian literature is rich in local hagiographies. Foremost among these is the Pannonian Legends (or Lives of Cyril and Methodius), the most important source of information on the lives and work of Cyril and Methodius. There were also the unpreserved General Lives of Clement and Naum, the Shorter Life of Clement of Ohrid, also unpreserved, and the Life of Naum, which has been preserved. Here too can be numbered the Lives of Clement of Ohrid (the Fuller and the Shorter), of Theophylact and of Homatian, written in Greek language. The Lives of Prohor of Pchinya, of Joachim of Sarandapore, of Gabriel of Lesnovo and of Hilarion of Meglen also belong to this group of local hagiographies.

Apocryphal works, which were not in step with the teachings of the official church and were proscribed by official state circles, appeared on the Macedonian literary scene at a very early date. Of

the Old Testament apocryphal works there exist texts concerning the progenitor, the Patriarch Abraham (the Sermon on Abraham and Sarah; the Sermon telling how Sarah instructed her husband, Abraham; and the Sermon on the Life and Death of Adam). Other apocryphal works are the Book of Enoch, the Revelation of Baruch and texts concerning the King and Psalmist David and about Samson and Delilah. Of the New Testament apocryphal works there exist: the Epistle of the Emperor Avgar to Jesus Christ; the Vision of the Apostle Paul: the Second Coming of Christ; the Miracles of the Holy Mother of God; the Wise Man and others. The apocryphal works were used, especially by the Bogomils, in opposition to the official church.

Many of the romances and fables which came into the Slav literatures from Byzantine and Latin sources, including the Romance of Troy and the Romance of Alexander, were read and copied on Macedonian soil. Other example of well-known romances are the Romance of Barlaam and Joasaph and the Romance of Stephanite and Ichnilate. Among the mediaeval fables read and copied in Macedonia were Theophana the Innkeeper, anecdotes from the Life of Aesop, the Tribulations of the Blessed Grozdia – a parody of hagiographic works – the Tale of Eladia (who gave his soul to the devil in order to obtain the woman he loved) and the tale from the cycle of the Miracles of the Blessed Virgin about the innocent woman who was condemned and lost both her hands but had them restored thanks to the mercy of the Virgin.

As in the literatures of the other South Slav peoples Macedonian literature of this period contained all the varieties of works designed to bring spiritual joy to men. The life of many of these works extended through the following centuries and they were to influence much of Macedonian folklore.

In Macedonia there have remained to the present day various inscriptions from ancient times. These were inscribed on stone – on tombstones or on the walls of monastery churches – on metal vessels and crosses or were written in the margins of old manuscripts and later of printed books, or at the end of manuscripts. The oldest Cyrillic inscription is that from 993 on the headstone of Emperor Samuel. In addition to the fact that certain of them are of literary value these inscriptions are of considerable significance in the reconstruction of the past of the Macedonian people.

### *Art*

At the time of their settlement of the Balkan Peninsula the art of the Slavs was on a much lower level than that achieved by Byzantine art. The first real development of the art of the Macedo-

nian Slavs began in the ninth century when it incorporated new forms and conceptions under increasing Byzantine influence.

Macedonian art, in the true sense of the word, began with the coming of Clement to Macedonia. With the building of his monastery below the fortress at Ohrid (893) and of the church dedicated to St. Pantelleimon, the Macedonian Slavs gained not only their first great religious and educational centre, and one of epoch-making significance, but also the conditions necessary for a change in the forms given to their aesthetic feelings since, in this monastery, they accepted and continued artistic forms which had been created and developed on Macedonian territory before their advent. Clement used for the foundation of his monastery a ruined triple-conch church which had been raised on the ruins of an early Christian basilica. The triple-conch, with certain minor alterations, is also present in the Monastery of the Holy Archangel, built some years after Clement's monastery, and which later came to be known by the name of its Donor, St. Naum. Not far from it are other triple-conch churches (at Goritsa near Ohrid, in the villages of Zlesti and Vineni, at Izdeglavje and at Kublitsa in Castoria) which date from the ninth to the eleventh centuries. Quadruple-conch churches were also built in this period (the Church of the Virgin of Eleusis at Velyusa) but the majority of the churches were in the form of basilicas (St. Achilles on the Island of Achilles on Lake Prespa, St. Sophia in Ohrid, the Virgin Mary in the village of Vranishta near Struga, St. Leontes near Strumitsa and Ss. Anargiris and Taksijahis in Castoria).

The most important church, after those of Ss. Clement and Naum, is the Church of St. Sophia in Ohrid which is thought to have been used as the Cathedral Church of Ohrid: its dimensions and the arrangement of the decorations in the altar area seem to suggest this. It was most probably built as a reconstruction of a ruined church, at the time of the Emperor Samuel or immediately after the collapse of his empire.

In terms of artistic quality painting was of a higher standard than architecture. While the latter was of a largely provincial character, the painting equalled that of the Byzantine capital.

Ample proof of this can be found in the frescoes of St. Sophia in Ohrid, of Velyusa and Vodocha. Those in St. Sophia possess artistic qualities which rank them among the best frescoes in the whole of Byzantine art.

The best examples of artistic activity in the period from the renewed establishment of Byzantine rule until Macedonia's inclusion in the Serbian state of the Nemanya dynasty can be seen in the fragmentarily preserved architecture and painting of Nerezi (1164), Kurbinovo (1191), Manastir (1271), St. Nicholas in the village of Varosh near Prilep (1299), St. Sophia in Ohrid (the second

layer of paintings dates from the thirteenth century) and the Blessed Virgins of Peribleptos – now St. Clement's – (1295). The variety of architectural forms is characteristic. After this period in Macedonia and the neighbouring countries the five-cupola cruciform church was to become one of the distinguishing features of mediaeval art.

The painting of this period belongs to the Comnenian (Nerezi and Kurbinovo) and the initial phase of the Palaeologian style (Manastir, the Blessed Virgin of Peribleptos and St. Nicholas in Varosh). Apart from those basic features which are present in all Byzantine art of the period there are elements which are the pride of Macedonian painters, particularly in Nerezi and Kurbinovo. In Nerezi there is a new element expressed nowhere else so vividly, not even in Constantinople: the feeling of the reality of the inner experience of the characters in the dramatic scenes such as the sufferings of Christ. This element reaches its culmination in the Lamentation at Nerezi.

When towards the end of the thirteenth century the style of the Palaeologi became dominant in the Balkans the characteristics which had in a sense differentiated Macedonian fresco painting from that of the rest of the area continued to be present. In Peribleptos the dramatic elements did not decrease – indeed they increased. The Lamentation there, by the painters Michael and Euty-chius, would appear to be a vivid study of people and life. The activity of the studio of these two painters which extended from Athos to Prizren is a testimonial to the continuing growth and movement of Macedonia art, the centres of which were in Salonika, Ohrid, Skopje, Bitola, Castoria and numerous monasteries including St. Clement's, St. Naum's, Lesnovo, Skopje Tsrna Gora and Treskavets.

During this period, under the influence of the religious movement known as Hesychasm, monastic living in caves and remote monasteries was on the increase in Macedonia as in all places where Orthodox churches were in power. In such monasteries works which came to be known as products of the monastic style were created. This style is present in some of the frescoes in the Church of St. Demetrius at Mark's Monastery near the village of Sushitsa in the Skopje district. From the third zone upwards the compositions include gaunt, humbly clad figures which would have been immediately recognisable to the ordinary monk and local inhabitant.

The paintings in churches built throughout Macedonia by the rulers and feudal lords as reconstructions of older churches were executed both in the court, or Palaeologian, and monastic styles. Certain monuments are linked with the Serbian kings and emperors and their feudal lords. Besides the church at Mark's Monaste-

ry already mentioned, these include the well preserved churches of St. Nikita, the Holy Archangel and Mateyche in Skopje Tsrna Gora, St. George's in the village of Staro Nagorichane, St. Nicholas' in Psacha, St. Nicholas in the village of Lyuboten, Lesnovo, the Holy Archangel in the village of Varosh, St. Andrew's on the River Treska and the Blessed Virgin of Zachumska (St. Zaum's) in Ohrid. The monumental exonarthex of St. Sophia in Ohrid was built at this time (1317). It is considered a rare achievement not merely in Macedonian art but in the whole of Byzantine art. St. Nicholas of the Hospitals, the Blessed Virgin of the Hospitals, Lesser St. Clement's, and Lesser St. Vrach's in Ohrid and possibly St. John's at Kaneo were built during this period. This is an indication of the wealth and variety of activity in architecture and the fine arts in Macedonia at this time. The quality of all the frescoes from the period is almost universally high so that poor works of art are a rare exception.

Portraiture was an important branch of painting at this time. It had been nurtured earlier on but no portraits dating from before the fourteenth century have been preserved. Those which have survived mainly depict Serbian kings and emperors and Serbian and Macedonian feudal lords. Among the most famous are the portraits of Stephen Urosh II Milutin and Simonida at Staro Nagorichane, the monumental portraits of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan and Helena at Lesnovo, the evocative portrait of the donor Despot Oliver, the portraits of Stephen Urosh V and Volkashin at Psacha and the group portraits of the Paskacha family also at Psacha. The portraits of Stephen Urosh IV Dushan, Helena, Stephen Urosh V, Ss. Sava and Simeon in St. Nicholas of the Hospitals in Ohrid, of the Archbishop of Ohrid in the same church and in St. Sophia where he is represented together with Despot Oliver, Maria Oliverina and their children and the portraits of Volkashin and his son Marko in the Holy Archangel in the village of Varosh and at Mark's Monastery are also of significance.

The painting of icons was an integral and very important component of the fine arts in mediaeval Macedonia. The icons represented all the Christian saints and most of all Christ, or the Virgin and Christ. Almost every townsman and all the feudal lords would have possessed icons, certainly including one of the saint who was the protector of the family. The chief centres of icon painting were to be found in Ohrid and in the larger monasteries. In addition icons were imported from abroad, which complicates the study of the development of icon painting in Macedonia. To date the largest number of icons has been discovered in the churches of Ohrid, including the oldest: the Forty Martyrs of Tiberiopolis from the twelfth century; the oldest dated Macedonian icon, of Jesus Christ, from 1262, and the single mosaic icon. These, and the icon

of the Annunciation in the Church of the Blessed Virgin of Peribleptos, which is the most subtle and harmonic achievement of Macedonian icon painting and is outstanding in the whole of Byzantine art, testify to the importance of Ohrid as one of the more artistically significant centres of icon painting in the Balkans.

Decorative plastic art was complementary to fresco painting and an integral part of architectural conception. The oldest preserved remains from the Slav period are those in the altar screen and from the ciborium of the communion table in the Church of St. Sophia in Ohrid. The human figure played a minimal role in this art form. Until the thirteenth century Macedonian plastic art exhibited numerous similarities to that of Greece while in the work produced in the fourteenth century increased Oriental and Western influences can both be felt.

Free-standing sculpture occupied a much more modest place in mediaeval Macedonian art. Unless high relief is included under this heading it would appear to have been virtually unpractised. So far there is only one completely portrayed figure known. This is the figure of St. Clement that dates from the fourteenth century. Just under life size, it is worked in wood in high relief.

Very little is known of mediaeval secular art in Macedonia. No picture exists of the outward appearance of the palaces and houses of the towns or of their interiors. Few remains have been preserved and those that do exist are of fortresses. To date the Ohrid fortress is considered to be the oldest. A part of the older fortress was built above Roman graves and the newer part dates from the fourth century onwards. The other more significant fortresses were those in Skopje, Strumitsa, Shtip, Tetovo and Bitola.

The crafts had a place of their own in mediaeval Macedonian art. The crafts of the goldsmiths and potters were the leading ones. The thirteenth and fourteenth century gilded silver icon chains from the treasury of St. Clement's Church in Ohrid are among the most important achievements of the goldsmiths' art.

Mediaeval music in Macedonia was primarily of an ecclesiastical character and strongly influenced by Byzantium. Its beginnings belong to the period of Cyril and Methodius' activity among the South Slavs. Music must have occupied a place of considerable importance at Clement's University and achieved a particularly strong growth in Samuel's state which provided conditions not only for ecclesiastical but also for secular musical activity. Although musical life stagnated after the fall of this state certain Macedonians were extremely influential in the development of Byzantine church music. One of these was John Cucusel, the most outstanding personality in the history of Eastern Orthodox music. He is thought to have been the inventor of the new notation and is credited with the invention of the new intonation. He was also a fruitful composer and wrote numerous ritual hymns.



## *TURKISH RULE IN MACEDONIA: FIFTEENTH TO EIGHTEENTH CENTURY*

### MACEDONIA DURING THE GROWTH OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

#### *State and Military Structure of the Ottoman Empire*

The Osmanli state developed from a bey's estate, or principality, created on the ruins of the Seljuk Sultanate in the north-west of Asia Minor. The ruler of the principality was Ertoghrul, who was succeeded in 1281 by his son 'Osman, the founder of the Osmanli dynasty which was to rule the Empire until its fall. 'Osman strengthened his position in the territory he had inherited and then managed to extend his rule to the neighbouring regions, particularly those held by Byzantium. His policy of conquest was carried on successfully by his successors, his son Orkhan (1323-1362) and his grandson Murad I (1362-1389), who extended it to include the Balkan Peninsula.

Concurrently with its military successes the young Osmanli state spread and consolidated its constitutional and military organisation. When the Osmanli crossed over to the Balkans and conquered Macedonia the basic state institutions and military organisation of the Empire were still in a state of development. Built on a basis of feudal social relations it was an extremely despotic state with many elements of theocratic rule. The Sultan was the supreme head of the country and his power was unrestricted. His capital was first in Bursa, then Adrianople (Edirne) and, from 1453, in Constantinople (Istanbul).

The head of the state administration was the Vizier. In 1386 a second Vizier was appointed and from then onwards one of the two performed the functions of the First, or later Grand Vizier. The number of viziers continued to increase so that by the middle of the sixteenth century there were four.

For a more satisfactory treatment of administrative and military affairs, the state was at first divided into two large provinces,

called Beylerbeylics: Rumelia (the European part) and Anatolia (the Asiatic part). At the head of each province stood a Beylerbey. In the course of time and in step with the extension of the state frontiers the number of Beylerbeylics grew and their nature changed. They were renamed Elayets or Pashalics. In the seventh decade of the fourteenth century the position of Kaziasker, or Supreme Military Judge, was instituted. There were two such judges, one for Rumelia and one for Anatolia. A high state function was that held by the Nichandji, the Keeper of the Seal, who headed the administration and in the Sultan's name placed his seal upon all acts issued by the central government. The Defterdars, whose number increased with the course of time, were in control of financial affairs. The Divan, or Council of State, in which all the highest state officials, including viziers, kaziaskers and defterdars, participated, was summoned for the resolution of important matters of state. During the time of Mehmed II the Conqueror (1451-1481) the Sultan himself regularly took part in the sittings of the Divan but after that time only did so in exceptional circumstances. The Grand Vizier was the President of the Divan.

The armed forces were divided into land and naval forces. The former was the main military power and consisted of the Sultan's guard and provincial (Elayet) armies. The cavalry (sipahis) were the most numerous section of the Elayet armies. The striking force of the Sultan's guard was the Corps of Janissaries which was formed about 1329. The Janissaries were recruited from among prisoners-of-war and also, by means of the Blood Tax, from the subordinated Christian population. This tax was gathered by rounding up healthy and well-built young men who were converted to Islam and submitted to a special education. The navy was built up intensively from the time of Sultan Bayazid I (1389-1402) onwards. It was commanded by the Kapudanbasha. At the time of the war of conquest the Grand Vizier was Commander-in-Chief of all the armed forces.

In the Ottoman Empire feudal lords did not have the right to exert legal, administrative, financial or military authority in their own estates. The state organs of government were active in all feudal lands. The legal system was founded on the Şeriat (Shari'a) which had its basis in Islam. The Koran and Hadith were the basic books from which the ideas and principles for the construction of legal regulations were drawn. No laws passed, that is the Kanoun namé, could in principle contradict the Seriat. The supreme religious leader, the Şeyh-ül-İslâm, had the right to interpret and assess the legal norms from the point of view of Islamic law. The authority of the courts was not distinct from that of the prosecutor's office.

### *Territorial and Administrative Divisions of Macedonia*

The Ottoman Turks immediately set about establishing their own administration in their newly conquered territories on the Balkan Peninsula. In most cases they retained the existing administrative and territorial divisions in respect of both the lower and also the higher units of administration.

The highest unit, which gradually took charge of the entire territory of Macedonia, was the Beylerbeylic, or Elayet of Rumelia. Regions of an expressly military or of a temporary character were set up in the frontier zones. The oldest such region in the Balkans lay in the neighbourhood of Salonika and was administered by the famous military commander Evrenos bey. When Skopje fell under Ottoman rule in 1392 it became the centre of a new region. The first Skopje regional commander was Pashaigit Bey (1392-1414) who was succeeded by Isac Bey and he in turn by his son Isa Bey.

The Beylerbeylics were divided into sanjaks, or *livi*, which were the basic military and territorial-administrative units of the Empire.

The Pasha Sanjak, governed personally by the Beylerbey of Rumelia, was at the same time one of the oldest and one of the largest of the sanjaks. In the course of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries new sanjaks were created, some of which incorporated parts of Macedonian territory: Küstendil, Ohrid, Salonika and Skopje. The sanjaks, in turn, were divided into vilayets, or *nahii*. As well as the divisions of territorial administration a division into kazas (territories over which the competency of the judges, or kadis, extended) was in force. The size of the kaza depended upon the number of Moslems in a given region. In time it became a significant legal and administrative unit in Macedonia and its territory ordinarily extended over several vilayets, although it was not unknown for it to coincide with the area of the vilayet, or *nahi*. In the course of time a large number of alterations were made in the over-all system of administrative and territorial division in the Ottoman Empire so that any attempt to set out the development, particularly in respect of the lower units of territorial administration, is a complicated process.

### *Colonisation and Islamisation*

With the aim of creating a stable support for the new political and social system in conquered Macedonia the Ottoman authorities stimulated voluntary and also introduced systematic enfor-



ced migration of Turkish elements from Asia Minor. Thus, even in the earliest period of Ottoman domination, many Turkish settlements sprang up all over Macedonia, particularly close to more important routes, in the valleys of navigable rivers and on the coastal plains. The increase in the Moslem population of the towns, especially the larger ones, often took place at the expense of the Christian population which stagnated or was even reduced. The nomads of Anatolia were particularly suited to migration because of their way of life. As a result of their colonisation a small belt of settlements of Turkish livestock-breeder was established, Yurutsi and Konyari, near Salonika, and in the districts of Nevrokop, Strumitsa, Radovich, Kochani and Ovche Pole.

The settlement of Jews who had fled from the excesses of the Inquisition in Western Europe, above all in Spain and Portugal, from the end of the fifteenth century was of particular significance to Macedonia's economic development. Jewish colonies grew up in all the more important urban centres – in Salonika, Bitola, Skopje, Berroea, Castoria, Serres, Shtip, Kratovo and Strumitsa. The colony in Salonika was one of the largest and most significant in the whole of the Empire. By the middle of the sixteenth century it contained some three thousand Jewish household.

The process of Islamisation also began early on. A section of the old nobility was first of all converted to Islam and hoped thereby to protect or even extend their small-scale land-holdings. Islamisation gradually assumed greater proportions so that there were instances of whole villages and districts being converted. Some of the Islamicised Macedonian population, especially in towns where they were in continual contact with the Turkish ethnic element, were gradually assimilated as Turks. The majority of Islamicised Macedonians however retained their own mother tongue and many of their folk and even religious customs.

### *The Introduction of the Timar-Spahi System*

The fundamental distinguishing feature of the feudal system in the Balkan countries under Osmanli rule was the Timar-Spahi system – that is to say a system in which the supreme owner of the land was the state in the person of the Sultan and the immediate owner was the peasant, or raya. Between the Sultan and the peasant there was usually a small-scale feudal landlord, spahi, who, in return for his military service, received a fief out of the state land but without the right to dispose of it and a strictly defined income in the form of feudal rent from the rayas living on his fief. The relationship between the feudal lord and the peasant was un-

der the direct control and protection of the state. Such was the system that prevailed in Macedonia towards the middle of the fifteenth century. It was of particular significance that the feudal overlord was an alien conqueror, distinct both ethnically and in religious faith from the Macedonian population.

The Sultan's power was established on a real, material foundation. Into his treasury went the incomes from imperial fiefs which included, apart from large complexes of state land, the revenues from mines, commerce and various taxes. The highest state functionaries had fiefs of their own, the annual income from a single one of which amounted to at least 100,000 akças. The annual income of the fief owned by Isa Bey, the Skopje regional commander, excluding that from Skopje itself, was 763,000 akças. State land was given to feudal lords in the form of fiefs of different sizes (has, zeamet and timar). The zeamets produced an annual income of between 20,000 and 99,999 akças and the timars at most 19,999. Small timars, giving an income of between 2,000 and 6,000 akças, were predominant in Macedonia in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

In the early period of Osmanli rule in Macedonia there were Christians in the ranks of the spahis. According to an incomplete census from the mid-fifteenth century, out of a total of a hundred timars and two zeamets in the territory of the Prilep and Kichevo nahiye, twenty-seven timars and one zeamet were in Christian hands. In the 1466/67 census of the Debar district eighteen of the ninety-eight recorded timars were in Christian hands. The number of Christian spahis decreased continually however so that in the sixteenth century they had almost completely disappeared. Most frequently they were converted to Islam and amalgamated with the feudal lords of Turkish nationality. This was the surest and often the only way of permanently safeguarding their class positions.

The members of the feudally dependent peasantry, both Christian and Moslem (the rayas), held a limited amount of state land (bashtina or tshiftlik). The raya enjoyed this land on the basis of a written document, a tapia, which gave him the right of inheritance and disposal of the land provided he had the agreement of the spahi beforehand.

Apart from containing the properties of the rayas the timars and zeamets also included large-scale fiefs which were left for the personal use of the spahi. These properties were worked by share-cropping or forced labour. Although the state land took up most of the workable land area, there were also mülks, which were inheritable and could be disposed of, belonging to the large-scale feudal lords. The most meritorious Turkish military leaders and feudal lords, such as Evrenos Bey and Isac Bey, were awarded mülk estates by the Sultan. Later on these mülks were reduced in size or con-

verted into vakif bequests. The awarding of mülks in this later period was merely a stage in the obtaining of a vakif, a necessary formality as state land could not be converted directly into a vakif.

### *The Position of the Dependent Population*

The introduction of the timar-spahi system brought no essential changes to the position of the raya, the feudally dependent class which included virtually all the Macedonians. The raya were economically exploited by the feudal rent, which worked to the advantage of the immediate feudal lord and the state. All three varieties of feudal rent were in existence, although at first rent in kind was predominant while the state made most use of work rent. The basic contribution in kind was a tithe, or âşar, which was charged on all agricultural products. The amount of the âşar could, however, vary from the basic tenth to half of the annual production. The âşar on certain products was frequently collected in money form. The ispence, collected in money form from all adult Christians capable of working, amounted to twenty-five akças and that collected from the Moslem raya totalled twenty-two akças and was called the resmi tschift. The feudal charges on domestic animals, fishing, watermills, rolling mills, and forges as well as the bridal, damage and other taxes were collected in money form. The peasant was obliged to work for his spahi for a certain number of days in the year, i.e. to contribute work rent or forced labour.

The state also played its part in the exploitation of the raya. From all non-Muslim adults it collected the cizye or harac, a money tax which was used mainly for military purposes. The amount of this tax depended upon the economic power of the area in which it was levied, the property qualification of the taxpayer and the needs of the state, but it was in fact continually being increased. No less important to the state and degrading in its effect on the subjugated people was the blood tax. The state also made use of a whole variety of irregular obligations which the raya were forced to meet in the form of direct state taxes, contributions in kind and in the form of forced labour. The number and scope of these taxes were constantly increasing and came to be a heavy burden on the raya.

A section of the raya was involved in certain services to the state: forms and institutions already in existence were widely accepted and merely modified to suit the new circumstances. Several military and semi-military ranks were formed in this way as well as particular groups of the citizenry with special duties towards the state: martolozes, *voynuks*, falconers, derbendcis, bridge-keepers

and rice-growers. The martolozes were mostly employed in safeguarding areas threatened by outlaws, or haiduks, or as garrisons in certain fortresses and provincial towns. The *voynuks* carried out various functions: they went into battle as fighters or as members of supply corps and worked in the imperial stables or in the imperial meadows. The task of the falconers was to catch, train and look after falcons for hunting. The service of the derbendcis was spread widely throughout Macedonia, consisting as it did of providing safe passage through gorges and other places where passage was difficult on the more important military and trade routes. Linked with the service of the derbendcis was that of the bridge-keepers who were responsible for guarding and repairing the more important bridges. The rice-growers were obliged to provide the state with a certain quantity of rice which was a basic food. The miners, or madencis, coal-miners, tar-makers and ferrymen were also among the section of the population with particular duties. In return for their services to the state all these categories were freed either in part or wholly from certain tax contributions and other obligations of the raya, which was a form of compensation for the rendering of their particular services. There were differences, sometimes extremely pronounced, in the status of different categories of the population and occasionally even among members of a single category.

Apart from this feudal exploitation the Macedonian people were subject to religious and national discrimination which was to become marked in the following centuries and particularly in the eighteenth century when the term 'raya' became virtually synonymous with the enslaved Christian populations of the Ottoman Empire.

### *Economy*

The rural economy of Macedonia in this period was largely a natural one. Agriculture was extensive but techniques remained at the previous level of development. The peasant produced different varieties of wheat, vegetables, fruit and industrial crops and devoted a part of his land to viniculture. Certain new cultures were introduced and others which had previously been grown only to a limited extent were now more widely cultivated: tobacco, cotton, rice, sesame, opium poppies, maize, saffron, aniseed, chick-peas and certain green vegetables. Animal husbandry became one of the chief branches of the rural economy. All types of large and small livestock were kept and the number of sheep and goats was particularly large. The buffalo was introduced from Asia Minor as a

yoke animal and the use of the camel also spread. The growth of hunting and river, lake and sea fishing was marked.

In this period the towns grew significantly and gradually took on a more visibly oriental character. In some of them there was a decline in certain of the old crafts while new oriental crafts were stimulated. The tanners' and furriers' crafts experienced a particularly strong growth. Jews, who had business links with Western Europe, contributed greatly to this development. In the towns the craftsmen were organised in guilds whose members were called *esnaf* or *rüfeka*. These were closed corporations, with separate guilds for Moslems, Christians and Jews, and had as their aim the reduction of competition among practitioners of the same craft. The building up of a strong central government, a certain amount of legal security and the measures undertaken to safeguard the roads all had their effect on the development of domestic trade. A significant rôle in this development was that played by fairs held in several places in Macedonia, including Struga, the village of Dolyani near Strumitsa and the village of Beshik near Siderokapsa. The circulation of money was also at a fairly developed level. The coins of those Western European states with which the Osmanli Empire had trading links were in circulation as well as Turkish coins. The basic monetary unit was the *akça*. At the same time as domestic trade foreign trade also developed. Salonika was one of the most important centres through which trade passed. The leading rôles in foreign trade were played by the merchants of Dubrovnik (Ragusa) and of Venice, Jews and Greeks. Various metal and luxury products were imported, including finely woven goods, silver and gold articles, salt and weapons, while skins, furs, wool, wheat, silk and silver were all exported.

The Ottomans endeavoured to revitalise mining which had been quite highly developed before their advent. Captured mines were ordinarily converted at once into imperial hases and then leased out. The best known mining centres were those of Kratovo, Siderokapsa and Pravishta. In the more important mining and urban centres of Salonika, Skopje, Kratovo, Siderokapsa and Ohrid there were mints for silver and, less frequently, gold coins.

#### *The Position of the Archbishopric of Ohrid*

Islam was the dominant religion in the Ottoman Empire but the Osmanli authorities did not prohibit the existence of other religions and church organisations. The organisation of the Ohrid Archbishopric was to remain in existence right up to 1767. It even extended its sphere at the expense of neighbouring churches. At

the beginning of the fifteenth century the eparchies of Sofia and Vidin were subordinated to it, the Vlach and Moldavia towards the middle of the same century and shortly afterwards parts of the Patriarchate of Pech including Pech itself. For a certain period the Orthodox districts of Italy (Apulia, Calabria and Sicily), Venice and Dalmatia were also subordinated to the Ohrid Archbishopric. However at the beginning of the sixteenth century the Vlach metropolitan diocese was subordinated to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. In 1530 Paul, Metropolitan of Smederevo, rejected the authority of the Ohrid Archbishopric. On 13th March, 1532 a synod of archpriests was summoned in Ohrid which excommunicated Paul and all the clergy he had ordained. Paul continued to regard himself independent and adopted the title of Patriarch. By bribing the state organs of government he was instrumental in bringing about the temporary imprisonment of Archbishop Prohor of Ohrid. On 20th June, 1541 a further synod of archpriests was summoned at Ohrid which was attended by Paul himself. The Synod removed him from the ranks of the dignitaries of the Church. At this period the Metropolitan of Castoria was also opposed to Prohor. At the Synod, as at the previous one, all attempts at secession from the jurisdiction of the Ohrid Archbishopric were condemned together with all those who, by bribing the Ottoman authorities, had procured Sultan's decrees (*beraat*) for the establishment of separate eparchies. When the Patriarchate of Pech was re-established in 1557 Tetovo, Skopje, Shtip and Upper Dzumaya were removed from the Archbishopric of Ohrid. The Orthodox Christians of Dalmatia and Venice accepted the jurisdiction of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1575 and at the beginning of the seventeenth century the Ohrid Archbishopric lost the eparchies in Southern Italy. After that its boundaries remained unaltered until the time of its dissolution.

The Archbishopric of Ohrid was an autonomous Church headed by an Archbishop who was elected by the Synod. The Synod was composed of all the archpriests of the various eparchies. The Synod of Archpriests was summoned to deal with more important matters while general peoples' – Church matters were dealt with by the Church Convocation. The majority of the Archbishops were greedy for money and open to bribery but some of them worked to raise the standing of the Archbishopric. Certain of them, including Prohor, Athanasius and Barlaam, even worked secretly against the Ottoman state. Archbishop Barlaam was executed on this account in Veles on 28th May, 1598.

The Christian Church had lost certain of its possessions with the Osmanli Conquest but it still remained a feudal institution. Apart from the returns from its lands the Church received considerable income from various taxes for the settlement of marriage and

inheritance disputes. The lower clergy were Macedonian and were scarcely distinguishable economically from the mass of the people. The leading positions in the Church were occupied by Greeks. The Church was however an upholder of the independent culture of Macedonia in this period.

## MACEDONIA AT THE TIME OF THE DECLINE OF THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

### *Changes in and Weakening of Ottoman Feudalism*

In the second half of the sixteenth century obvious signs of the weakening of the Ottoman Empire appeared. With increasing frequency the successes of the Ottoman armed forces gave place to grave defeats and territorial losses. This was symptomatic of deep-seated changes in Ottoman feudalism and above all of the crisis which was affecting the timar-spahi system. The growing activity in terms of goods-money relations led to a gradual destruction of the framework of the closed natural economy. Feudal lords endeavoured to replace the raya's tax contributions in kind by monetary contributions as this facilitated the satisfaction of their own needs and enabled them to exploit the dependent population still farther. They became less and less interested in taking part in unsuccessful wars and this led to an increase in the number of military deserters. The weakened central government made unsuccessful attempts to halt the growth of desertion. The decline of the central government's authority and control created a suitable situation for the usurpation of the small-scale military fief by the more powerful large-scale feudal lords. The depleted state treasury urged the central government itself to take steps which undermined the military fief. Spahi landholdings began to be distributed among representatives of the court aristocracy and people who had no link with the rank of spahi. The state leased out its sources of income to the highest bidder. The leaseholders behaved like fully-fledged lords and masters towards their leased property, frequently handing it over to a third party while retaining a fixed income for themselves. Thus landholdings increasingly moved out of the control of the state and entered the realm of economic transactions, losing their essential quality of immobility. The raya's right to dispose of his plot of inherited real estate also became a means of untying the peasant from the land. People from outside the ranks of the raya be-

gan to purchase these plots. They transformed the purchased land into tschifliks, which might have been made up of several plots and even whole villages. The new lord of the raya's land, the tschifliksaybia, continued to fulfil the obligations which had been met hitherto by the tied peasants but the land was now worked by people with whom the tschifliksaybia had entered into free contract. These were tschiflikari who no longer had any share in the ownership of the land. The peasant worked on the tschiflik under harsh conditions dictated by the tschifliksaybia since to the existing duties towards the spahi and the state was added the exaction of an additional rent which went to the tschifliksaybia.

### *Development of Towns and Urban Economy*

The constant influx of Moslems, Jews and, from the middle of the seventeenth century, Christians resulted in a speeding up of the growth of Macedonian towns. Under the pressure of increased feudal exploitation, which was accompanied by the marauding of robber bands, peasants were leaving their hearths and fleeing either to join outlaw organisations (aydutska družina) or into the towns, where some of them succeeded in becoming factors of significance in the urban economy.

In the seventeenth century some Western European states procured certain privileges and opened consular agencies in Macedonian towns. French merchants from Marseilles opened an agency in Salonika in 1685 and another in Kavalla in 1700 through which they obtained cotton and wheat. Later on consulates were established by Britain, Venice and the Netherlands. Throughout the century Salonika enjoyed the position of being the largest port for European goods destined for the Balkans.

With the ascendancy of Atlantic trade routes Dubrovnik (Ragusa) and the Italian towns began to decline, particularly in the seventeenth century, and this was reflected in their diminishing rôle in the commerce of Macedonia. Instead of Ragusan and Italian traders there emerged local traders whose trade expanded, especially with Middle Europe.

### *Catholic Propaganda*

Although Catholic influence and propaganda had been felt as early as the sixteenth century, this activity was of a desultory and unorganised nature up till 1622. In that year, when the Papal Throne came under Jesuit domination, a body called the Congre-

gation for the Spreading of the Faith was established. It aimed to control all Catholic missionary activity throughout the world. This activity was felt in the Archbishopric of Ohrid. During the first half of the seventeenth century four of the Archbishops of Ohrid were secret propagators of Catholicism: Porphyry, Athanasius, Abraham and Meletius. Links were also set up by certain eparchs, including Eremia of Pelagonia. The Congregation approached the Orthodox population of Macedonia with utmost caution and tact. Missionaries from Rome did not impose the Latin language upon the service of divine worship and they were instructed to respect the dogma of the Eastern Church. This policy strengthened Catholic propaganda in Ohrid to such an extent that in 1630 the Uniates attempted to take over the archiepiscopal church of the Assumption of the Virgin but the Archbishop bribed the Ottoman authorities handsomely and was able to retain the church. Towards the middle of the seventeenth century a Catholic Archbishopric was formed in Ohrid but, as favourable conditions were demonstrably absent, it was soon to be dissolved and subordinated to the Diocese of Skopje.

In 1661 Archbishop Athanasius journeyed to Rome where he agreed to a Union between Rome and the Archbishopric of Ohrid. His missionary Onuphrius Constantine was elected as a Bishop of the Greek College in Rome with the title of Archbishop of Debar although he lived permanently in Rome. The Union was not however realised and Catholic propaganda in Macedonia began to weaken. Among the peoples of the Balkans the hope was growing that Russia, an Orthodox country, would liberate them from bondage.

#### STRUGGLE AGAINST FEUDAL EXPLOITATION AND OTTOMAN RULE IN MACEDONIA

##### *Participation in Scanderbeg's Uprising*

The Macedonian people demonstrated early on that they were not reconciled to Osmanli rule and were saving their strength for a struggle against their conquerors. Towards the middle of the fifteenth century the Greater Debar region, where Macedonians, Albanians and Vlachs all lived, was involved in an uprising led by George Castriota Scanderbeg.

Scanderbeg came from the illustrious feudal family of the Castrioti which had ruled that part of central Albania which inclu-

ded the Debar region. During the Ottoman conquest George's father, John Castriota, had managed to retain his dominions by acknowledging the supreme authority of the Sultan and fulfilling certain obligations as his vassal. At one time John Castriota gave his sons to the Sultan as hostages. One of them was George – at that time in the most energetic years of his youth. Having accepted Islam George changed his name to Iskander (Scanderbeg, i.e. Alexander). Gaining a reputation and the confidence of the Ottoman supreme authorities, Scanderbeg was given the governorship of the district that had belonged to his father, who died in 1437. When the "Long War" began, in 1442, with the penetration of the interior of the Ottoman Empire by the armies of János Hunyadi, Scanderbeg estimated that the time was ripe for him to renounce allegiance to the Sultan and to raise a rebellion of all the people.

Making good use of the panic created in the ranks of the Ottoman army by Hunyadi's great victory in 1443 near Nish, Scanderbeg who was at this point in an Ottoman encampment together with his own troops, took a decisive step towards the achievement of his purpose. He deserted from the front and, together with his nephew Hamza and three hundred cavalymen, set out towards his fatherland. His route took him first of all to the Debar region where he at once found many supporters. Accompanied by the local chieftains and a considerably number of rebel peasants from the region, he set out for Croia (Krujë), the most important military and administrative centre in the entire area. He took Croia without any great difficulty and returned once more to the Debar region carrying on his agitation and the organisation of a general rebellion. One of his closest collaborators in this activity was the Debar chieftain Moses the Great, a descendent of the powerful feudal family of the Arianites.

The revolt spread swiftly so that in Croia on 27th November 1443 Scanderbeg was in a position to declare himself head of the independent principality of the Castrioti. The rebellion achieved marked success shortly after this when a large number of fortresses fell into Scanderbeg's hands. Among them Svetigrad (Kodzhadzhik) was of particular strategic significance. It fell after a fierce battle in which three thousand rebels from the Debar region participated, led by Moses the Great.

The Debar region was completely liberated and became a border territory offering resistance to the Osmanli state. As a result the region was the first to suffer Ottoman attacks and became the arena for continuous encounters between the rebels and the regular Ottoman army. On 29th April 1444 a great battle was fought at Dolni Debar which proved a horrendous defeat for the Ottoman army: seven thousand of its soldiers were left dead upon the field and five hundred were lost as prisoners-of-war. The rebel striking

force in this battle consisted of insurgents from the Debar area led by Moses the Great. Two years later, on 27th September 1446, a further battle took place on Debar soil in which the Osmanli forces again suffered heavy losses. In the summer of 1448 Sultan Murat II together with the heir prince Mehmed set out in person against Scanderbeg who was at the fortress of Svetigrad. The Svetigrad garrison, made up of local forces led by Peter Perlat, offered strong resistance and the stronghold only fell after a long-drawn-out siege and with previous agreement on the part of the Sultan that the besieged be allowed to come out of the encirclement unhampered. The Sultan was, however, suddenly forced to halt his action so that the greater part of the Debar region remained in the hands of the insurgents.

The new Sultan, Mehmed the Conqueror, took even more energetic steps towards putting down the uprising. In July 1452 a large Ottoman army was concentrated near Ohrid. When he was informed of this Scanderbeg at once went to the military camp at Oronik, where the town of Debar stands today. Together with Moses the Great and Hamza Castriota he there put up resistance. The first large scale battle between the two opposing armies took place near the fortress at Modrich. There, as in the battles that were to follow, the rebels gained a decisive victory over their adversaries who were forced to retreat. In April of the following year fresh attacks upon the insurgents took place. On 22nd April 1453 in Polog the rebel army, led by Scanderbeg and Moses the Great, carried off a further victory over the army of Ibrahim Pasha. However in 1455 Scanderbeg suffered a grave defeat near Berat. He lost nearly half his army, about six thousand men. The principal cause of this defeat was treachery on the part of his closest collaborator, Moses the Great. He allowed a large Ottoman army to cross the frontier of the Debar region unchecked and to strike the forces of the insurgents unexpectedly in the rear.

Moses the Great's defection did not lead to the loss of the Debar region which he had hitherto governed. The local population remained loyal to Scanderbeg who, immediately upon Moses' retreat with the Ottoman troops, hastened to meet the population and gained their support in continuing the struggle against the Ottoman Empire. On 19th May 1456, when the rebels, commanded by Scanderbeg in person, came into conflict near Oronik (Debar) with the fifteen thousand strong Osmanli army led by the traitor Moses the Great, the latter suffered great losses and went over to the side of the insurgents once more. Pleased that he had his old fellow-soldier and talented military commander with him again, Scanderbeg entrusted the Debar region to him once more. Soon afterwards the uprising encountered even greater difficulties caused by fresh treachery on the part of leading feudal lords and suffered

extensive, if only temporary, territorial losses. Thanks to treachery the fortress of Modrich, which was of similar strategic significance to that of Svetigrad, fell into Ottoman hands in the same year. Thus new routes by which they could penetrate the rebellious territories were opened up to the Ottoman armies and in the summer of 1457 they reached the town of Lesh. It was only by means of a fierce and unexpected counter-offensive that Scanderbeg succeeded in defeating the enemy troops and so finally solving the critical situation. He managed to regain the territory he had lost and carried on successful battles and diplomatic actions in defence of the gains he had made.

The lengthy struggle against Scanderbeg convinced the Sultan that large-scale and continuous military actions were required to subdue the free rebel territory. The tried and courageous military commander from Mat, Balaban Pasha, an Albanian by origin, was installed at the head of the Osmanli military expedition. His first actions took place in the Debar region in 1465. In these battles several of Scanderbeg's leading commanders, including Moses the Great, were captured, sent to Istanbul and cruelly put to death. Both sides suffered heavy losses but Balaban succeeded in pacifying the Debar region and thus forcing a transfer of military activity to the interior of the liberated territory in Albania. The death, on 17th January 1468, of George Castriota Scanderbeg, the revered leader of the uprising, after a severe illness, heralded the end of the revolt, which, was marked by the fall of Croia, on 16th January 1478.

### *The Mariovo and Prilep Revolt*

The breakdown of the timar and spahi system and the decline of the Ottoman state brought about an increase in the exploitation of the dependent population. Arbitrary violence on the part of the Osmanli government also increased. Parallel and in keeping with this, opposition from the tied population grew and was expressed in various forms. One such was the attempt of the peasants to avoid paying their taxes, fleeing into the mountains when the tax-collectors visited their villages. They frequently submitted complaints and requests that they be exempt from certain taxes or that these be reduced, threatening that otherwise they would abandon the villages. And often they did so. Some fled to other districts, while others abandoned the roadside villages and settled in less accessible places. They also fled to the *tshifliks*, particularly to those owned by military personnel from whom they sought protection. There were cases where such military or other eminent figures defended their *raya* from excessive state taxes and outrages.



Some villagers fled to the towns where there was greater security and where exploitation took a more bearable form. The more mobile and more decisive fled beyond the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire.

Armed struggle against feudal exploitation and outrages began early on. The first local uprising took place in 1564/65, starting in Mariovo and then spreading to the Prilep Plain and finally Prilep itself. The specific causes of the revolt are not known but the instigators are known to have been three peasants and two priests, all from the Mariovo administrative district. A decree from the Sultan of 3rd October 1564 ordered that the leaders of the rebellion be taken and some be punished with death while others be sentenced to serve as oarsmen on Turkish galleys. However, they fled whereupon a further decree for their finding and capture was issued. The revolt broke out anew, this time in Prilep itself. From a document issued in December 1565 it can be seen that the cause of this rebellion was the biased attitude assumed by the Prilep Court in settling a dispute between the peasants and the governor of the hases of the Vezier Mustapha Pasha. When the Court took the side of the governor more than a thousand rebel villagers who were assembled in front of the entrance to the Court rose up armed with stakes and stones, intending to enter the Court. As this took place on a Friday many Moslems were gathered at the place of the incident and were able to overpower the peasants. It is not known how this, to date the first known insurrection of the Macedonian peasants, ended.

### *Growth of Outlawry*

Outlawry was one of the oldest and longest lasting forms of the armed struggle of the Macedonian people. It reached its most developed state in the course of the seventeenth century. The outlaws, or haiduks, were organised in bands (*druzina*) normally of twenty to thirty people but occasionally numbering as many as three hundred. The band was led by an arambasha or voivoda who was elected by the members of the band. The assistant to this leader was the ensign-bearer who was responsible for looking after and carrying the flag. Outlaw bands usually assembled round about St. George's Day and disbanded about St. Demetrius' Day; although there were some who remained active throughout the winter as well, they were the exceptions. During this period they normally hid with accessories who undertook to conceal them or they confined themselves to winter quarters. Those who concealed outlaws came from all levels of society, even from among the ranks of the Ottoman authorities themselves. They assisted the outlaws to

such an extent that the saying came into being: "Without concealers there are no outlaws." Wounded or sick outlaws were often hidden in the monasteries. According to a document of 1618 the monks of the Lesnovo Monastery gave medical aid to wounded outlaws, looked after them and provided them with food.

The ranks of the outlaws were most commonly filled by feudally tied peasants but it was not unusual to find priests and monks among them. Women also joined the outlaw bands. The oldest record of a woman outlaw dates from 1636. She was Kira from the village of Tsapari, who was a member of the band of Arambasha Petar Dundar, from the village of Berantsi, near Bitola. There were also cases of women who became arambashas, leaders of outlaw bands.

The outlaws attacked feudal estates and their owners, fired *tschifliks* and the barns and harvests of the *spahis*, destroyed their tools, carried off or slaughtered their livestock and scattered the work force of their estates. They also ambushed merchants' caravans and tax-gatherers, whom they robbed or killed. The larger outlaw bands also attacked towns. They entered Bitola, Lerin (Florina), Ohrid and Resen on several occasions. Twice they looted the *bezesteen* in Bitola – in 1646 and in 1661 – from which they took a great deal of valuable merchandise. The Ottoman authorities undertook extremely energetic measures against the outlaws: they organised hunts, fired villages that were sympathetic to outlaws, imprisoned relatives of outlaws or put them to death, introduced the services of the *martolozes* and the *derbendcis*, cut down woods by the sides of roads, and built watchtowers and fortresses which were garrisoned with their troops. Captured outlaws were impaled on stakes and on iron hooks, or were flayed alive and had their heads split open, or were sent to long-term or life imprisonment, chained to galleys as oarsmen. Despite the strongest of measures, however, outlawry was never stamped out. In all the revolts and uprisings outlaws formed the nucleus of the armed population and very often supplied the leaders and commanders. They raised a spirit of resistance to Ottoman feudal lords and rulers among the mass of the people. It is for this reason that outlawry was so widely hymned in Macedonian folklore.



## THE KARPOSH UPRISING

### *Penetration of the Austrian Army into Macedonia*

In 1689 a section of the Macedonian people rose in a revolt that has come to be known, from the name of its leader, as the Karposh Uprising. The Austro-Turkish War provided the immediate occasion and encouragement for the raising of the rebellion, but its roots lay in the economic, social and political situation of the people.

In 1683 the Osmanlis had tried, for the second time, to take Vienna. After two months of siege, however, aid had come to the city both from the Austrian army and from the Polish army led by King John Sobiesky. The Ottoman army suffered a defeat which led to enormous losses of territory, materials and men. Soon afterwards, in 1683, the Holy League of Austria, Poland, Venice and, later, Russia was set up to oppose the Ottoman Empire. Gradually penetrating southwards, the Austrians reached Macedonia. On 25th October 1689, led by General Piccolomini, they entered the Plain of Skopje and were met with rejoicing by the inhabitants of the villages there. The same day they entered the town of Skopje which had been evacuated and left full of articles of food and merchandise. Feeling that he was too far from his headquarters, Piccolomini decided to withdraw at once and did so, having first set fire to the town. The fire raged for two whole days, 26th and 27th October 1689, and destroyed the greater part of Skopje.

After their withdrawal from Skopje the Austrians effected several penetrations into the Macedonian interior. One such was made by Herzog Holstein, the successor to Piccolomini who had died of the plague. Setting out from their camp at the village of Orizari, near Kumanovo, in the dawn of 10th November 1689 the Austrian detachments found themselves near Shtip. Here took place the fiercest and largest encounter between Austrian and Ottoman troops on Macedonian territory. The Ottoman army was forced to retreat, leaving about two thousand dead behind them. The Austrians fired the town and on their way back scattered a further Ottoman detachment of three hundred soldiers. In mid-November Albanian Catholic volunteers were sent to Tetovo where they succeeded in putting down more than six hundred Ottomans and taking as booty hundreds of head of cattle. Finally, on 20th December, an Austrian detachment, in whose ranks there were also Serbs led by Captain Sanoski, set out from Prishtina for Veles. The detachment entered Veles and thirty Ottomans were slain and others captured. The town was looted and fired but on its way back the

detachment was attacked by Janissaries and Sanoski received fatal wounds.

### *The Raising and Course of the Uprising*

During the Austro-Turkish War there was a sudden deterioration in the economic and political situation of the country. The pressure of taxes, lack of security and the violence reached a hitherto unknown degree. Military operations forced the state to increase its enforced purchase of grain, fodder, livestock, timber and other agricultural products at prices far below their real value. A host of new tax contributions were introduced. In this difficult period the raya also suffered from violence on the part of deserters from the Ottoman army and defectors from the central government. Among them Yegen Pasha, the previous Beylerbey of Rumelia, was particularly notorious. With ten thousand defectors he ravaged the Balkan Peninsula, but was finally put to death by the central government in February 1689.

Military catastrophe and the chaotic internal situation of the Ottoman Empire provided suitable conditions for the widespread wave of outlawry in all parts of Macedonia and particularly in the regions of Mariovo, Bitola, Tikvesh, Veles, Shtip, Mt. Dospat and the northern frontier zone. In such an atmosphere the effect of the Austrian arm's penetration into Macedonia was especially marked. Towards the middle of October 1689 an uprising led by the famous outlaw Arambasha Karposh broke out in the area between Küstendil and Skopje. Kriva Palanka, which housed an Ottoman stronghold built 1636, became the centre of resistance of the liberated rebel territory. Here six cannon fell into the hands of the rebels. They also constructed a completely new stronghold near Kumanovo. It is not impossible that they were in contact and worked together with Austrian detachments during the period of their penetration into Macedonia. In contemporary Ottoman chronicles and in local popular tradition Karposh is referred to as the "King of Kumanovo". This title was either conferred upon him or at least confirmed by the Austrian Emperor Leopold I who sent him a busby as an outward sign of recognition.

### *Defeat and Consequences of the Uprising*

A reversal of the military and political situation in the Balkans soon came about which played a decisive rôle in the fate of

the Uprising. The Osmanlis took energetic steps to stabilise the situation in the country and began making preparation for an attack upon the Macedonian rebels and the Austrian army. The Crimean Khan Selim Giray, with his fierce and warlike Tartar detachments, came to the aid of the Ottoman army. At a council-of-war in Sofia on 14th November 1689 it was decided that the attack be made through Küstendil, in order to put down the Karposh Uprising first, Kriva Palanka, where several thousand rebels were preparing to attack Küstendil, was the first place to be attacked. Learning of the vast numerical superiority of their adversaries, the rebels fired Kriva Palanka and withdrew to Kumanovo. The following day the Ottoman and Tartar detachments appeared before the latter town. The rebels waited for the enemy in front of the newly constructed stronghold. Karposh and a large number of the rebels were captured in the armed clash. Final resistance was offered from the fortress which was, however, taken in a charge and its defenders slaughtered. The victors then set out for Skopje taking the captured rebels with them. Beside the Stone Bridge over the River Vardar in Skopje Karposh was conducted before Selim Giray, impaled, pierced by Tartar lances and hurled into the river. This took place in the early days of December 1689. Karposh's tragic death marked the end of the Uprising.

The Macedonian peasants paid dearly for their attempt at liberation. For many the only salvation lay in fleeing far to the North, beyond the Sava and the Danube. A number of those who did so later crossed into Russia, where they set up their own army units and a distinct "Macedonian regiment" which operated within the composition of the regular Russian army. Large scale immigration of the Albanian population into the abandoned areas of North-western Macedonia then began.

#### *Manifesto and Protective Letters of Leopold I*

On 6th April 1690 the Austrian Emperor Leopold I (1657-1705) issued a manifesto with which he invited "all the peoples who live in the whole of Albania, Serbia, Mysia, Bulgaria, Silistra, Illyria, Macedonia and Rashka to join with the Austrians and take up arms against Turkey". Virtually at the same time, on 26th April 1690, he issued a letter taking the Macedonian people under his protection. The initiators of the issuing of this letter were Marko Krayda, born in Kozhani, and Dimitri Georgiya Popovich, born in Salonika. The letter declared, among other things: "We graciously accept the Macedonian people in its entirety in every respect under our imperial and regal protection". On 31st May

1690 the Emperor issued another letter, extending this protection to include the populations of Bulgaria, Serbia, Macedonia and Albania. However, Macedonia fell back into being a deep province of the Ottoman Empire and the manifesto and protective letters from the Austrian Emperor had no significant effect on the situation of its people.

## FEUDAL ANARCHY IN MACEDONIA

### *Reinforcement of Large-scale Feudal Lords*

After the Peace of Karlovats in 1699 the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire were retracted as far as the Sava and the Danube. In the eighteenth century several new wars broke out which, on the whole, had negative results as far as the Empire was concerned. In addition to the fact that with each newly concluded peace treaty it lost parts of its territory, it had come into economic and political dependence upon the more developed states of Western Europe. Moreover the internal situation was more and more impregnated with elements of feudal anarchy, created in the first place by the strengthening of large-scale feudal lords. Some of them so increased in power that they defected openly, maintaining their own private armies and following policies independent of or even antagonistic to that of the central government. Mahmud Pasha Bushatliya ruled as a semi-independent feudal lord over the districts of Ohrid, Debar and Skopje. Another such great feudal lord was Ali Pasha Tepelen of Ioannina who held sway over the South-western districts of Macedonia. The estates of the family of Abdul Aga Shabanderoglou were to be found scattered throughout Doyran and fourteen other kazas. He defeated Bey Hasan, who was on the side of the Sultan, and then went on to defeat the feudal lords of Petrich, Melnik and Demir Hisar and to take over their estates. The central government succeeded in destroying his power only as late as 1779. In the Serres district the families of Ali Aga and Ismail Bey, who had at their disposal six thousand Albanian recruits, strengthened their position. In the Skopje, Tetovo, Gostivar and Kichevo districts the "Tetovo Pashas" gained power, and in Ohrid Celadin Bey. These feudal lords all surrounded themselves with Albanian mercenaries and terrorised the population.

### *Banditry and Marauding*

Groups of bandits, who acted in collaboration with certain feudal lords and even state officials, circulated throughout Macedonia in the eighteenth century. The groups normally numbered from four to five hundred and were of Albanian or Turkish nationality. In 1709 the Lessee of the Tax in Prilep, Kadi-zade Mustafa, allied with the bandits and through them exerted pressure of the peasants. On several occasions in 1711 about a thousand bandits from Mat, with the support of the Deputy Lieutenant Governor and Tax Collector from Ohrid, attacked the town of Bitola. The attacks of Albanian bandits reached their peak in 1715 when they looted the villages around Prilep and Veles. In 1779 the Beylerbey of Rumelia himself was forced to intervene against the bandit group led by Sulyo Starova, while in 1780 an Albanian group despoiled the Slepche Monastery of its church furnishings and livestock. One result of these continual attacks was the retreat of the Macedonian population from Western Macedonia and the settlement of Albanians in their place.

The martolozes also contributed to the anarchic state of the country. Instead of upholding law and order they surrounded villages, taking money and food without payment and committed various atrocities on the pretext of pursuing outlaws. In the first half of the eighteenth century the Ottoman authorities were unable to put down the defector Martolobasha Hibetulah who, with a band of two hundred ex-martolozes, circulated in the districts of Lerin (Florina), Bitola, Kostur (Castoria) and Voden (Edessa).

In the course of the war between the Ottoman Empire and Austria and Russia, which lasted from 1787 till 1792, the krcali bandits appeared in Macedonia. They had hideouts in the Rhodopes, the Shar Mountains, the Skopje Tsrna Gora and in the Debar district but most of all in the mountains of Plachkovitsa and Ograzhden. They were organised in bands which numbered up to two thousand. In their ranks there were peasants, army deserters and women, of all faiths and nationalities. They rode on horseback and were extremely mobile. They would appear unexpectedly and loot whole villages and towns. Entire districts were devastated as a result of their activities. For more than a decade the Sultan's army was unable to settle accounts with these rebels.

### *Increase in Outlawry*

The anarchic situation of the country had its most drastic effects upon the Christian population. A way was most often sought in flight to the woods and mountains and in joining outlaw bands.

As a result of this there was in the eighteenth century an increase in outlawry which in nature and methods was similar to that of the preceding centuries. Because of the financial crisis the Ottoman authorities transferred the expenses involved in the pursuit and extermination of outlawry to the population itself. Thus in 1705 the villages of the Bitola kaza were burdened with providing 103,800 akçis designated for the pursuit of outlaws in the area. This was an enormous sum at that time. Unable to put down the outlaws by the use of force the Ottoman authorities often attempted to paralyse their activity in other ways. They proposed to the leaders of large outlaw bands that they and their followers become martolozes with a regular monthly income. On several occasions the authorities went so far as to pardon certain well-known haiduks or their bands. All this was done because of the powerlessness of the Ottoman government to oppose something which had become a mass movement and was a phenomenon of its time.

### *Development of Towns*

The incursion of the peasant population of Macedonia into the towns was a particularly characteristic phenomenon throughout the whole of the eighteenth century. This increased flow of population led to a change in the ethnic structure of the towns in the direction of their "Macedonisation". Apart from this the population shift from village to town resulted in the development of the urban economy, primarily of craftsmanship and commerce. The craftsman was gradually set free from small individual commissions and began to work on goods produced for an unknown consumer. Increasingly the leadership of the guilds passed into the hands of Macedonians. Merchants strengthened their links with the outside world: those in Ohrid had good connection with Durazzo and hence with the cities of Italy; the merchants of Castoria had lively contacts with Venice and Austria. Macedonian trading houses were opened in Salonika, Castoria, Bansko, Serres, Voden (Edessa) and Ohrid with bureau in Bucharest, Timisoara, Budapest, Vienna, Livorno, Venice, Odessa and Moscow.

The Vlachs provided a particular impetus to the growth of urban economy. Under pressure from Ali Pasha Ioannina's men, who fired the Vlach town of Moscopolis in 1769, there was a strong inflow of Vlachs into Macedonian towns, especially Krushevo and Bitola. There they developed intensive craft and trading activities.

### *The Abolition of the Ohrid Archbishopric*

Exposed to increasing pressure from the Phanariot party, the Patriarchate of Constantinople began to interfere more and more in the Archbishopric's affairs and to deal it repeated blows by means of various intrigues at the Grande Porte. In May 1763 the Patriarch attempted to place the man of his choice, the monk Ananias, on the Ohrid throne. But Ananias was not accepted in Ohrid and the Archbishopric elected the Macedonian Metropolitan of Pelagonia, Arsenius. This was the last victory of the autochthonous party. The Patriarchate, with the aid of the Ottoman authorities and of its allies among the higher clergy of the Ohrid Archbishopric, gradually did away with the Archbishopric by means of bribery and intrigue. In the end Arsenius was forced, on 16th January 1767, to resign his office "voluntarily", to recognize the Patriarchate of Constantinople and to request the abolition of the Ohrid Archbishopric. The Sultan issued a decree legalising its abolition and annexing its eparchies to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Ohrid Eparchy itself was abolished and the town came under the Metropolitan of Durazzo. Aiming to eradicate every single trace of the once autocephalous church, the Patriarchate even substituted the antique name of Lychnidos for the Slavonic Ohrid. A process was set in motion which replaced the local bishops, spread the Greek language and Greek culture throughout Macedonia and introduced new ecclesiastical tax contributions.

### CULTURAL CONDITIONS FROM THE FIFTEENTH TO EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

#### *Literature, Education and Art*

After the Ottoman conquest the monasteries were virtually the only cultural centres left in Macedonia. Having in their possession a large number of Slavonic manuscripts, the monasteries carried on the tradition of copying and reproducing liturgical, philosophical, didactic and other ecclesiastical documents. The most important of these centres were the Lesnovo Monastery near Kratovo, Mateyche and St. Prohor Pchinski near Kumanovo, Slepche near Demir Hisar, Treskavets near Prilep, Prechista near Kichevo, John Bigorski near Debar and Polog in the Tikvesh district. A strong impetus in this work was provided by Mt. Athos where the

Slavonic word continued to be cherished and heard in the monasteries of Chilandar, Zograph and Panteleimon.

The greater number of monuments to the literacy of this period are in the form of monastic records in which were written down the names and donations of all visitors to the monasteries. Towards the end of the sixteenth century and even more in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries translations were made of miscellanies with varied contents which were called damascenes and in which began to appear the elements of the Macedonian spoken language. Other important documents of Slavonic literacy from the same period were: Clement's Charter, the Slepche Letters, the Macedonian Damascene of the sixteenth century, the Tikvesh Collection of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the Treskavets Codicil of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Monasteries provided the necessary shelter for the first Macedonian schools, which were training schools for clerics. In the seventeenth and even more in the eighteenth century the monks began to open town schools, still in the neighbourhood of churches, where they taught basic literacy to a small number of children. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries such schools already existed in Veles, Skopje and Prilep. At the same time as these schools in which the language of teaching was a Slavonic one Greek schools, founded and materially supported by the Greek Metropolitans and Bishops, and by Vlach immigrants, began to appear in the towns. These in turn had a modernising influence on the Slavonic schools. The network of Greek schools was particularly extensive in the southern regions of Macedonia. From the middle of the eighteenth century there was a Greek school in Ohrid and in 1753 Eugene Vulgaris opened his Academy on Mt. Athos which operated for five years and trained about a hundred and fifty pupils from different areas.

The churches built in Macedonia during Ottoman rule were of more modest dimensions than those of the pre-Ottoman period and were built in villages. Architecturally their form was that of a single-naved building. An attempt was made to build churches which were indistinguishable from the houses of the village. The fresco painting executed on the interior walls and icons mounted on wooden iconostases frequently formed the only decoration in these churches.

The painters remained faithful to the old mode of painting but a slow decline in creativity can be seen in their work which gradually became nothing more than imitative copies of works of the previous epochs. The number of painters, journeymen and apprentices decreased so that ultimately there were only individual masters working with or without an assistant. Moreover the distan-

ce covered by those remaining decreased from day to day so that they finally operated only in a limited local field.

In this period there were several centres of painting of which the most significant were: the Ohrid and Prespa district, the Treskavets and Zrze monasteries in the Prilep district, Slepche, Lesnovo and the Skopje Tsrna Gora. Certain of their works were of considerable artistic value and importance, such, for example, as the paintings in the cave Church of the Holy Virgin at Peshtani; the snake cross, which was executed towards the end of the fifteenth or at the beginning of the sixteenth century, in the Church of St. Demetrius in Ohrid; the icon of the Virgin of Pelagonia, painted in 1422 by the monk Makarios from the village of Zrze; and the portrait of Kupa, executed in 1607, in the Church of the Holy Virgin at Slivnitsa Monastery in the village of Slivnitsa in the Prespa district.

In woodcarving of the period the influence of oriental elements increased. The double braid, worked in shallow and in flat carving, was a pure and exclusive motif in the carving which continued to exist right up to the appearance of intricate carving towards the end of the seventeenth and in the early eighteenth century. The best examples of shallow carving are the two doors of the old monastery Church of St. John the Baptist at Slepche from the second half of the fifteenth century. Here human and animal figures, represented only in general contours, are to be found in addition to shallow and flat arabesque carving. Another exceptionally important piece of woodcarving are the doors of the Treskavets Monastery probably executed towards the end of the fifteenth or at the beginning of the sixteenth century. There are also icons with frames worked in shallow carving. The most interesting is that of the Baptism of Christ from the Church of the Holy Virgin at Slivnitsa Monastery. Deep incision appeared towards the close of the seventeenth century and in the eighteenth century it displayed its advantages and beauty in the iconostases of the Churches of St. Naum by Lake Ohrid (1711) and St. Demetrius in Bitola (1775).

The conditions necessary for professional musical activity were not present in Macedonia during the period of Ottoman rule. However, folk songs remained and in them the people conserved all the varied manifestations of its soul and spirit, of its joy, suffering, pain and its customs. Anonymous composers produced their own tonal riches in the form of folk music which had a wealth of melody, harmony and architectonics and particularly of rhythms. Apart from church music, which remained in the style of the Byzantine chant, folk music was the only musical activity until virtually the end of the nineteenth century.

### *Islamic Culture in Macedonia*

The growth of Turkish literature in Macedonia can be traced from the second half of the fifteenth century when Skopje and Enidzhë Vardar, together with Adrianople, became the largest cultural centres in the European part of the Osmanli state. This literature and above all the poetry which was its most valued and cherished form was part of the general upsurge in Turkish literature which took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries but began to decline in the second half of the seventeenth century. There was not a single important town in Macedonia which did not produce a literary name of greater or lesser distinction. The earliest poets known to date are from the time of Sultan Bayazit II (1481-1512). These are Atay Üskübî, Zari, Feridî and Hakkî all of whom were from Skopje. Also from Skopje were the poets Muhiddi, Riyazi, Isaak Çelebi and Valaahi. The best known among them and indeed of all the mediaeval Turkish poets from Skopje is Isaak Çelebi (d.1537/8) who, on completing his schooling, was for a time a teacher in Isaak Bey's Medresa in Skopje. He is noted as the author of a Divan, or collection of poetry, and, among other works, of a poem on the town of Skopje.

The best known Turkish poets from Bitola are Haveri, Celali, Çelebi, Zuhuri Celebi, Celebi, Vahya, Kâtib Hasan and Ayani. Two poets, Sucudi and Tului, from Tetovo were included in the various anthologies of the sixteenth century. There is only one known poet – Zaifi – from Kratovo. Enidzhë Vardar occupies a place of particular importance in the history of mediaeval Turkish literature; the poets Hayreti, Usuli, Hayali, Jusuf Sine Çak, Illahi and Garibi all came from this region.

Many personalities famous in the cultural history of the Ottoman Empire lived and worked as teachers or as judges in the towns of Macedonia. Thus Taskopruluzade (Ahmed Isamudin Efendi, 1495-1554), who can justifiably be called an Ottoman encyclopaedist, was appointed as a lecturer at Isaak Bey's Medresa in Skopje in 1529. Aşık Çelebi, whose anthology is a source of first importance in the history of mediaeval Turkish literature, died in Skopje, where he had been a judge. The poet and scholar Veysi Efendi (1561-1628), who was also one of the greatest mediaeval Turkish prose writers, held the position of judge seven times in Skopje, where he died.

Islamic culture left obvious and lasting traces in the field of art, and above all in architecture. Throughout Macedonia there were constructed buildings, products of Islamic art, which served to satisfy various religious, educational, commercial, medical, housing and other requirements.

In all the urban settlements as in a large number of villages wherever the Moslem population lived there were Islamic temples, either mosques or mescids (small local mosques). Among the oldest and most beautiful are Isaac Bey's Mosque which is also known as the Alaca or Painted Mosque, built in 1438, and Isaac Bey's Mosque, which was built in the second half of the fifteenth century and to this day ornament the old part of Skopje. Several mosques of some significance were built in Bitola, among them the Jahdar Kadi Mosque, built in 1561/2 according to the designs of the eminent Ottoman architect Koca Sinan. The richly decorated "Painted Mosque" in Tetovo was built in the seventeenth century. The other towns of Macedonia present a similar picture of Moslem temples.

The mausoleums in which distinguished Ottomans were buried are a particular sort of building. One of the oldest of these that has been preserved is the mausoleum at Isaac Bey's Mosque in Skopje.

The extent to which the ranks of the dervishes spread throughout Macedonia led to the building of numerous dervish convents or hermitages. Thus, for example, in Serres alone there were seven such hermitages by the first half of the sixteenth century. In Skopje in 1660 there were twenty dervish convents, among which the most outstanding was the Sultan Emir Convent. The Arabatibaba Convent in Tetovo is impressive on account of its large complex of ancillary buildings.

The medresas, or religious schools, occupied a place of distinction among urban buildings. One of the first significant medresas in Macedonia was that built by Isaac Bey in Skopje in 1445. There was also a large number of imarets, or kitchens for the preparation and free dispensation of food to the poor and to travelers. Medresas and imarets were usually ancillary buildings in the complexes around the larger mosques composing a single architectural unit.

Numerous inns and caravanserais were built in the more important urban and commercial centres and at certain points along the main traffic routes. One of the finest is the Kurshumli Caravanserai in Skopje. Many bezestens, or covered markets, were built in order to meet the needs of commerce in the towns. These were significant elements in the overall architectural as was the case with the Mustapha Pasha Covered Market in Skopje and with the Bitola Bezesten.

Public baths, or hamams, were built in all the towns and even in villages. Particularly outstanding by reason of their monumentality were the Daut Pasha Baths and the Çift Baths in Skopje. Considerable attention was paid to the construction of public systems of piped water, drinking fountain and wells.

Other areas of the total field of Islamic artistic activity in Macedonia during the period of Ottoman rule still remain to be studied, e.g. the decorative arts, manuscript illustration, calligraphy, carving and filigree work, in all of which exceptional results were achieved.

Education was of an emphatically religious nature and was carried out in the medresas (religious high schools) and the mektebs (religious elementary schools). By the fifteenth century at least two medresas were operating in Skopje. One of them, the Isaac Bey Medresa, was one of the oldest and best known in the entire Balkans. In addition to religious knowledge, Oriental languages, Islamic law, philosophy and mathematics were studied in these schools. They provided the personnel for the higher state and religious institutions. The network of mektebs was much more widespread and extended even into the villages. According to Eulia Çelebia's account, there were seventy mektebs in Skopje alone. The teaching of basic literacy and religious knowledge was the main function of such schools. Dervish convents also ranked as educational institutions of a sort in which the dervishes inculcated religious fanaticism and a warlike spirit.

Books occupied a place of considerable importance in the cultural life of the Islamic world. Oriental libraries were already set up in the mosques, medresas and convents of Macedonia in the early period of Ottoman rule. The books contained in these libraries were of a predominantly religious nature. One of the richest such libraries, that endowed by Isaac Bey at his mosque in Skopje in 1445, is considered to have been the oldest.

### *Albanian National Folklore*

The Albanians in Macedonia possessed a rich cultural life of their own in which the influence of the other cultures with which they came into contact, Slavonic, Greek and Islamic, could also be felt.

Calendar songs, cradle songs, wedding and love songs occupied a place of considerable importance in Albanian national literature. The rich, interesting and very varied epics which are to be found mostly in the Debar and Kichevo regions are extremely old and part of the mythological heritage. Albanian national literature is also rich in folk tales.

Legends and historical folk songs, as well as wedding and love songs, were accompanied on the gusla. The tunes are on the whole modest and closely resemble recitations.

Albanian architecture found its expression in religious buildings, churches and mosques, and was closely linked to Byzantine



and Islamic culture. Churches existed up to the time of the massive Islamisation of the Albanian population in the seventeenth century when very many of them were destroyed together with the graveyards.

Albanian houses differed little from Macedonian houses. The typical Albanian house is that of the Debar and Kishevo regions where the builders were most frequently Macedonians from Dolna Reka.

Albanian costumes were exceptionally rich in colour. They frequently differed from one village to the next and were of marked originality in the mountain villages. This was particularly the case with women's costumes while those of the men were fairly well standardised throughout the whole of Macedonia.

## *COLLAPSE OF FEUDALISM AND BEGINNINGS OF CAPITALISM IN MACEDONIA*

### *MACEDONIA IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY*

#### *Socio-economic Changes*

The swift decline of the Ottoman Empire and its defeats in the wars against Russia and Austria in the eighteenth century were expressed internally in the weakening of the central government and resultant anarchy. Towards the end of the eighteenth century and in the early part of the nineteenth century Macedonia, like the other parts of Turkey in Europe, was a hotbed of unrest stirred up by military deserters and by local feudal lords who had usurped power, declared themselves independent rulers and were settling their account with one another. Ismail Bey of Serres, Ali Pasha of Ioannina, the Debar Pashas, Recep Pasha in the Skopje Pashalak and Celadin Bey in the Ohrid and Prespa district gained notoriety in this way.

Political and economic insecurity here as in the rest of Turkey in Europe led to the inauguration of noticeable social changes. Above all there was large-scale migration from the villages to the towns. This, slowly but surely, altered the ethnic composition of the urban population in the interests of the Macedonian element, and the urban population increased rapidly.

The increase in urban population led to the furthering of craftsmanship and commerce. Agricultural products, particularly cotton and tobacco, and also craft products became two of the principal elements in the trade exchange with the Central European states and even with Russia.

Fairtrade trading enjoyed particular success in Macedonia. The fairs in Serres, Prilep, Doyran, Struga, Enidzhé Vardar, Petrich and Nevrokop became a powerful factor in commercial relations with foreign countries. Nor were they any less significant in the development of domestic trade. This enabled the Macedonian population to enter into commercial activity. Macedonians from

Veles, Bitola, Serres, Bansko and Ohrid set up their own agencies in Vienna, Leipzig, Trieste and Belgrade. This, in turn, resulted in many Macedonian merchants becoming bearers of progressive ideas, particularly in the fields of education and culture, while others became involved in the national struggles of the neighbouring Balkan peoples and in this way contributed to the general liberation of oppressed peoples.

The social changes which took place in the Ottoman Empire as a result of its acute economic and political crises at the end of the eighteenth century and in the first decade of the nineteenth were reflected in Macedonia. They were evident in the increase in migration from village to town and in the boom experienced by the urban economy, particularly by craftsmanship and trade. The appearance of a Macedonian bourgeoisie, the presence of which was felt as an independent factor in the cultural, educational, social and political life of the country, was a consequence of these changes.

Developments in Macedonia at the beginning of nineteenth century also affected its position within the Ottoman Empire. Various political, military and strategic factors arising out of the above-mentioned changes caused Macedonia, which had been administratively linked to the Rumelian Eyalet with its seat in Sofia to become the centre of the Eyalet and brought about the transfer of its seat from Sofia to Bitola. According to figures from a French source of 1807 the population of Macedonia was then 968,500. The number of Christians was 724,500 and of Muslims 204,000.

#### *Macedonian Participation in Balkan Uprisings*

For the oppressed peoples of the Balkans the beginning of the nineteenth century marked the start of their national struggles for liberation from the centuries-long domination of the Ottoman Empire. The earliest herald was the First Serbian Uprising of 1804. The Greek Uprising of 1821 was the next to break out. Macedonians took part in both these uprisings. In the First Serbian Uprising, for instance, the brothers Zhikich, one of whom, Volché had been one of the builders of the Deligrad fortifications, distinguished themselves on the field of battles; in the sphere of diplomacy Petar Chardakliya was outstanding in his efforts to protect what the people had achieved by their revolt, while Petar Ichko concluded the well-known Ichko Peace Treaty of 1806 with the Ottoman Government.

When news of the uprising in Serbia reached Macedonia the spirit of the people was stirred to action. To protect itself from an-

ticipated events the Ottoman Government concentrated large numbers of troops in Macedonia and disarmed the population of the Skopje district.

Macedonians participated directly in the Greek Uprising of 1821 also. Immediately upon the outbreak of the rebellion bands were formed in the southern part of Macedonia and in particular in the Voden (Edessa) district. Among the leaders of such bands were the brothers Ramadanovi, Dimché Minov, Dincho Drzhilovich and Demir Trayko. These bands joined forces with the rebels.

Strongly influenced by the ideas of the Greek freedom fighters the inhabitants of this part of Macedonia took up arms in the cause of their own liberation. In April 1822, under the leadership of Atanas Karataze and Gacho, a revolt was organised in the town of Negush and in the villages around Voden (Edessa). The town of Negush was taken and became the centre of the revolt. Within a short period the revolt had spread over a relatively large area. In spite of their great efforts, however, the rebels did not have the strength to stand up to the pressure of large numbers of Ottoman troops. Isolated and besieged on all sides the rebels were suppressed and dispersed. The town was recaptured and fierce persecution and pillaging of the rebel population followed. This led to the resettlement in other parts of Macedonia of the Macedonian population from the rebellious region.

There were also Macedonian participants in various of the other revolutionary uprisings in the first half of the nineteenth century both in the Ottoman Empire and outside it. The presence of some Macedonians and their part in the events of 1848 in Vayvodina and in Garibaldi's detachment in the same year have been recorded.

#### *Reforms in the Ottoman Empire and their Application in Macedonia*

Profound internal upheavals in the Ottoman Empire, brought about towards the end of the eighteenth century and in the first half of the nineteenth by a stagnation in social progress and by the efforts of reactionary forces to conserve the existing system, called for the introduction of certain reforms to avoid the further decline of the state. Incapable of any more radical undertakings, the central government gradually began to introduce reforms which aimed at adapting to the degree of social development that had already been achieved. From the time of Selim III (1789 – 1807) onwards several reforms were effected within the Ottoman Empire.

In the first instance the reforms affected the army and the system of finances. In 1826 Mahmud II abolished the Corps of Janissaries. In 1834 a further step forward was taken: the existing timar and spahi system was abolished. This was in the nature of an agrarian reform and its implementation continued in certain parts of Macedonia until the sixties of the nineteenth century.

On 3rd November 1839 the central government announced what was to be known as the *Gilhan Hatisherif* which was the greatest achievement among the reforms introduced. Having come about as a result of the influence of the ideas of the French Revolution this Act proclaimed equality before the law for all citizens regardless of belief, nationality or social status and guaranteed the security of life, honour and possessions.

The *Gilhan Hatisherif* with its liberal ideas did not merely confirm all the reforms which had already been introduced but also opened up the process of the penetration of reform into all aspects of public life including the army.

To popularise the reforms more fully large scale public meetings were organised in the towns at which specially prepared interpreters explained their significance. With the aim of reaching as many people as possible the texts were printed in the languages of the population at whom they were directed. A well-known example of such a document is one from the year 1851 written in the Macedonian language and entitled "*Kanoun Name*" for the villages of the Bitola district by way of being a law for the *chiflik* workers and those *chifliks* which come under the decree of Bitola". This law established the method of election of villages elders (*kocabashi*) and forbade any sort of pressure or abuse by local authorities in the collection of taxes and also established the relations between *chiflik* owners and *chiflik* workers.

The introduction of these reforms in the Ottoman Empire was by no means a painless process. The reforms encountered particularly strong resistance in the army. The Albanian and Bosnian feudal lords refused to apply them in their territories. In this they were supported by *Celadin Bay* of Ohrid and by the pashas of Tetovo and Skopje. Thus northern and central Macedonia lay in the hands of rulers who were renegades. Macedonia became an arena for the settling of scores between the renegade forces and those of the central government. In the battles at Babuna and near Prilep, in April and May of 1831, the renegade forces were defeated. But these conflicts had grave consequences for the population of Macedonia. Prilep and its surroundings and the Skopje *Tsrna Gora* were all plundered. Later in 1843-45 northern Macedonia was once again a centre of renegade activity and pillage by the reactionary forces of this part of Turkey. Only with the victory of the central

forces near Katlanovo in 1845 was this area able to breathe once more after a period of terror and looting. These activities were however to have after-effects of a lasting nature.

Hesitation in the application of the reforms and opposition to them led to many of the reforms remaining nothing more than empty proclamations. The Crimean War was to place its seal upon this. In spite of inconsistencies in their execution the reforms did however have a positive effect on the country's future development after the Crimean War.

The Crimean War (1853-1856) which broke out between the Ottoman Empire and Russia brought the process of the execution of reforms to a temporary standstill. It also contributed to a worsening of the situation in the country. Taxes, whose collection was accompanied by even greater abuses, were levied on the population. This stirred up dissatisfaction among the people and led to outlawry in the mountains, especially in the Bitola district. The form that this took was not, however, particularly powerful. After the signing of the Paris Peace Treaty of 1856 work on the implementation within the Ottoman Empire continued at an accelerated rate.

### *Beginnings of the Renaissance*

The growth of production forces and of trade from the end of the eighteenth century and the introduction of reforms which created a relative stability brought out into the open the need for development in church and school activity in Macedonia. The increasing social needs of Macedonian merchants demanded this and a further factor was contact with the advanced cultural centres of Central and Western Europe.

The opening of new schools was of primary importance. Schools already existed in some of the larger towns but there the instruction was in Greek, a foreign language. There were also schools attached to the larger monasteries but their purpose was the training of clergy. Thus it was essential that educational institutions be established in which the teaching would be in Macedonian and the graduate pupils qualified to satisfy secular needs. From the thirties of the nineteenth century the founding of schools was intensified. Schools were established in all the richer towns – Skopje, Veles, Bansko, Shtip, Nevrokop, Prilep, Kumanovo and Tetovo. They were still primitive in character but marked, nevertheless, the beginning of a new, more modern education.

The writing of textbooks developed hand in hand with the founding of schools. Marko Todorovich Vezgov from Bansko had assisted in the publication of a primer which was to meet the needs

of almost the entire Slav south as early as 1792. Yordan Hadzhi Konstantinov Dzhinot, important in the overall growth of education in Macedonia, was particularly distinguished in this field.

Concurrent with this development in education churches were being built in the more prosperous districts. The building of new churches and the need for administration of both churches and schools led to the formation of church and school districts which were in essence the beginning of self-government by the Macedonian people while still within the framework of the Ottoman Empire.

The awakened and enriched public life at the beginning of the nineteenth century, standing out as a renaissance in contrast to the profound anonymity in which the people had dwelt for centuries, stimulated the appearance of literature. The first literary figures were, on the whole, monks such as Yoakim Krchovski and Kiril Pechinovich.

As in literature so in art: the woodcarvings as well as the icons were of an ecclesiastical character. The artistic qualities of the work of Negriya and Makarya Frchkovtsi from Galichnik and Petre Filipovski Garka from the village of Gari deserve particular attention. They executed the carving of iconostases in Lesnovo monastery church, the Church of the Holy Salvation in Skopje and the monastery church of St. John Bigorski and in various towns throughout Macedonia.

## CHANGES IN MACEDONIA AFTER THE CRIMEAN WAR

### *The Hatihumayun of 1856 and Other Reforms*

Reforming activity within the Ottoman Empire, brought to a standstill by the Crimean war, went on apace once the war was over. The renewed growth of reform started with the issuing of the Hatihumayun of 18th February, 1856. It proclaimed equality of belief and national equality for all nationalities within the Ottoman state, freedom of thought and religious conviction, mixed courts and the right of Christians to occupy state posts and to serve in the Ottoman army. With the Hatihumayun the entire process of reorganising state administration, the judiciary, police and the tax system was opened up.

In 1865, on the basis of the Hatihumayun, a law was passed which introduced a new system of administration within the Otto-

man Empire. Vilayets were created. Different parts of Macedonia were included in three vilayets: those of Salonika, Bitola and Kosovo – later Skopje.

Territories outside Macedonia were also included within these three vilayets.

This organisation of the administration was to persist in Macedonia until the very end of Ottoman domination.

The Crimean War had several lasting effects on the Ottoman Empire. One of its effects was to stimulate the growth of economic activity within the country. Agricultural production, both from arable farming and animal husbandry, increased as did craftsmanship. Old roads were improved and new ones built. This positive development continued even after the war was over. The network of roads, Skopje – Kumanovo – Kriva Palanka, Kumanovo – Vranje, Veles – Prilep – Bitola, Bitola – Resen, Bitola – Voden (Edessa) and Melnik – Serres, was improved. The Vardar was rendered navigable. The setting up of the first telephone lines in the country began and, towards the end of the sixties of the nineteenth century, the laying of the railway line from Salonika to Skopje. The improvements in the road network increased trading activity. Not only the domestic market but also a more intensive involvement in international exchange developed. A particular growth occurred in fair-tide trading. The fairs in Prilep, Serres and Nevrokop, among others, became main centres of trade exchange with foreign countries.

The Crimean War had these positive results but it also accelerated the fall of the Ottoman Empire under the domination of the Western capitalist powers. Laying itself wide open to the industrial products of the Western states, the Ottoman Empire brought into question the development of its own economy. Because of its low level of productivity it was not in a position to stand up to competition from industrially produced goods. One of the results of this was the decline of craftsmanship and, later, of agriculture. The Ottoman Empire was obliged to be in continual debt to Western financial circles in order to meet its increased internal needs and also the demands of the state bureaucracy. This led to loss of any economic and political independence and a deterioration in the condition of the population. The repayment of loans required an increased fiscal contribution. In certain parts of Macedonia the situation of the peasantry was made even worse by the settlement of Tartars and Circassians from Crimea and the Caucasus. Not only were they allocated the more fertile land but with their terrorisation and pillage they became the affliction of the peasant farmer. The situation so deteriorated that a strong will to emigrate appeared among the local population. Some migrated to the larger urban centres while others moved farther afield to Rumania and

Austria. In the sixties from the Bitola district there were cases of emigration as far as Russia.

### *Unrest in the Balkans and outlawry in Macedonia*

In spite of efforts to modernise the Ottoman state by means of reform it remained an essentially backward country with grave internal contradictions and conflicts. Even in times of relative peace and prosperity resistance on the part of the exploited and humiliated subject peoples smouldered constantly. In Macedonia this resistance found expression through outlawry which had not ceased to exist throughout the entire period of Ottoman bondage.

Before the Crimean War outlaw activity had been conducted by relatively small bands. It was during this period that Iliya Markov, better known as Old Man Ilyo of Maleshevo, had first appeared. Taking to the mountains in the year 1849, Old Man Ilyo soon became a legendary figure because of his bravery. In the fifties and sixties of the nineteenth century a large band gathered round him and circulated throughout the mountains of his native region. By the sixties the number of bands had grown to sixty-two. Some of the leaders were women, such as Rumena of the Kriva Palanka district and Sirma from Western Macedonia.

In addition to these outlaw bands illegal groups were also formed in the towns. These were involved in the preparation of organised revolts. Such was the case in 1862 when a plot was organised by Spiro Dzherov. This plot involved about eighty-three villages in the districts of Bitola, Lerin (Florina), Ohrid and Resen and aimed at raising a rebellion. The plot was discovered, however, as a result of treachery and was put down. In the sixties and the seventies of the nineteenth century there were several revolts, particularly in Maleshevo, in Eastern Macedonia.

### STRUGGLE FOR A POPULAR CHURCH, EDUCATION AND CULTURE

#### *Church Struggles Against the Patriarchate of Constantinople*

The socio-economic changes which had taken place in the Ottoman Empire by the first half of the nineteenth century had a

positive effect on the creation of a Macedonian bourgeoisie. Until the appearance of a native bourgeoisie, Greek, Jewish and Vlach elements had been dominant in the economy and particularly in trade. These elements, especially the Greek, had consequently also dominated public life as a whole in the country. The birth and growth of Macedonian bourgeoisie brought out into the open the question of market relations and the domination of the market from which the way led to public affirmation, i.e. to domination in public life, as well. In other words with the appearance of a native bourgeoisie the struggle to exclude Greek trading capital from the Macedonian market began. As the Patriarchate of Constantinople protected the interests of Greek trade and banking circles the struggle to remove the Greek bourgeoisie from the Macedonian market was also directed against the Patriarchate and all that it stood for. The struggle was directed, firstly, against Greek Patriarchate church and educational institutions. Under the conditions of the absolutist Ottoman Regime the political affirmation of the subject Macedonian people could only be achieved in this way, through the removal of the Greek bourgeoisie from key positions in the market and in the public life of the towns. Through the assumption of leading positions in the church and school districts and the eparchies control could be effected over church expenditure, that is the expenditure of popular funds, and employment of these funds for publicly useful ends could be ensured: namely the development of church and school activities in the Macedonian mother tongue, the elimination of particularism and the gradual but continual establishment of internal links.

The earliest signs of the struggle of the strengthened Macedonian middle class against Greek domination in economic and public life, against the abuses perpetrated by all ranks of the Greek clergy and against the use of the Greek language in churches and schools had appeared in the thirties of the nineteenth century. This was the period when the foundations of the Macedonian church and school districts were laid. The first evidence of such activity comes from Skopje, where the citizens demanded the appointment of a person of local, Macedonian origin as the bishop in charge of the Skopje Eparchy.

The struggle against the Greek Patriarchate of Constantinople was long and hard. It began as a movement directed against particular Greek clergy – the local Greek bishops – and for the achievement of certain rights in dealing with church and school affairs, but it changed into a large-scale struggle the aim of which was to end the rule of the Patriarchate and to create an independent church, that is to say to revive the autocephalous Ohrid church abolished in 1767. A variety of means were employed in the efforts to gain independence. For instance in 1859 the inhabitants

of Kukush (Kilkis) severed their links with the Constantinople Patriarchate and established contact with the Roman Church, agreeing to enter into the Union on certain conditions. Rome accepted the request that religious services be conducted in a Slavonic Language and this marked the beginning of Uniate activity in Macedonia.

In the period from 1860 to 1870 the inhabitants of several towns broke off relations with the Patriarchate of Constantinople and established separate church and school districts. These included Ohrid, Prilep, Nevrokop, Bitola, Skopje and Krushevo and also some villages.

In the course of time the struggle against the Constantinople Patriarchate came to involve almost all the Slav nations under Ottoman rule but it was particularly intense in Bulgaria and in Macedonia.

Various political interests and intrigues became involved in this struggle which was an expression of the national aspirations of the Macedonian and other peoples who came under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman government saw in this an opportunity of setting the three peoples involved, Bulgarian and Macedonian on the one side and Greek on the other, at odds with one another, and also a way of eliminating Russian influence in the country. The Great Powers, and above all Russia, attempted to make use of the struggle for their own ends and therefore tried to restrict its aims for a considerable time.

The differing national political interests of the Bulgarian and Macedonian peoples came to the forefront in the church and school movement which they conducted jointly.

With the growth and derestriction of the struggle this difference became more and more evident and ended in public dissatisfaction with and disapproval of the aims of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie in Constantinople to give the struggle an exclusively Bulgarian national character and use it to extend their aspirations towards Macedonia.

It was under such conditions that, on 28th February 1870, after lengthy and arduous efforts, a firman was issued proclaiming the establishment of a separate Bulgarian church, called the Bulgarian Exarchate. Certain eparchies which lay outside the ethnic territory of Bulgaria, such as Nish and Pirot in Serbia and Veles in Macedonia, were included within the framework of the new church.

The issuing of this firman was a political act of the first order. According to its tenth clause eparchies which had not been included in the Exarchate could be joined to it if two-thirds of the population were in favour. On the basis of this right the Skopje and Ohrid Eparchies joined the Exarchate. In this way the Otto-

man government had set under way a long-lasting and exhausting feud between the two churches, while at the same time ensuring its own position as arbiter in the dispute.

The tenth clause was to the satisfaction of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie. It afforded the Macedonian population an opportunity of withdrawing from the Patriarchate but did not answer their demands for an independent church organisation. Among the Macedonian people there were demands for the revival of the Ohrid Archbishopric even if this were to be achieved with help from the Pope. This did not however alter the basic policy of the Exarchate which became the mouthpiece of the expansionist aims of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie to revive the one-time Greater Bulgaria in the Balkans. The Exarchate not only had no intention of recognising the Macedonian people's partnership in the struggle against the Patriarchate but, endeavouring to place its own people as presidents of the church and school districts, trespassed upon their autonomy. The consequences of this were the stifling of the independence of the Macedonian people and the start of the propaganda war which neighbouring bourgeoisies waged in Macedonia.

### *Textbook Activity in Macedonia*

Efforts to displace Greek and to introduce Macedonian into schools were begun by the Macedonian intelligentsia, limited though it was numerically, at the same time as the struggle against the Greek clergy. These efforts were organically linked to church and school activity. In the field of education the war upon the Greek language and Greek textbooks was extended to encompass also a war against the imposition of Bulgarian upon Macedonian schools. The Macedonian intelligentsia thus expressed its aspirations towards an independent national development both in its resistance to the imposition of Bulgarian and in its endeavours to build up a Macedonian literary language. From the earliest more explicit appearance of Macedonian individuality the clash with Bulgarian aspirations towards Macedonia took a keen form. The Bulgarian intelligentsia and especially the Bulgarian colony in Constantinople, which virtually controlled the struggle against the Greek Patriarchate, reacted with the utmost ferocity to the idea of the creation of a Macedonian literary language distinct from Bulgarian. It accused the supporters of the idea of a separate growth for Macedonia of 'separatism' and 'Macedonianism', intending thus to discredit them in the eyes of the Macedonian public as destroyers of the unity of the struggle against Hellenism and so to annihilate their efforts.



The earliest reaction to the imposition of Bulgarian in Macedonia was that of the teacher Nikola Filipov of Bansko. In a letter sent to the Bulgarian philologist Nayden Gerov in 1848, he protested against the ever more determined imposition of the Bulgarian language in the schools of Macedonia. In effect, however, the first use of Macedonian in textbooks was introduced by the Metropolitan of Doyran, Parteniya Zografski of Galichnik. He wrote two textbooks: "A Short Religious History" (1857) "Basic Education of Children" (1859).

Outstanding among the relatively numerous writers of Macedonian textbooks for use in schools were Dimitar Makedonski with his "Short Religious History for the Schools of Macedonia" (1867) and "Primer for Use in Macedonian Schools" (1867); Kuzman Shapkarev, Veniyamin Machukovski and Gyorgyi Pulevski.

The appearance of textbooks written in Macedonian was greeted with sharp disapproval by Bulgarian circles in Constantinople. They were also sharply criticised in the Bulgarian press. Keen and merciless competition was organised in Macedonia itself. Bulgarian representatives distributed textbooks written in Bulgarian free of charge and in this way strangled the initiative taken by Macedonian writers who did not have sufficient financial means at their disposal to enable them to take similar action.

On its establishment the Exarchate took the management of school affairs into its own hands. This meant that the campaign against Macedonian textbooks and their writers became more organised.

Despite that the initiative of writing textbooks in Macedonian was eventually put down, the achievement of the textbook writers was a factor of significance in the development of Macedonian national culture and individuality.

Together with the developments in education, which, adopting many up-to-date achievements in the field, were remarkably rapid at the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century, there were also developments in the form of reading-rooms and other similar institutions. The reading-rooms became an important factor in the educational process and in the general raising of the cultural level of the population. The reading-rooms were usually attached to schools and in particular to Sunday schools. The church and school districts were responsible for their management and upkeep.

### *Literature and Art*

Changes occurred in the fields of literature and art in Macedonia after the Crimean War. The growth of a national renaissance

replaced the predominance of religious themes by an interest in folk literature. An intensive collecting and publishing of folk poetry and folk tales began. The leading places in this sphere too were occupied by Macedonian teachers and textbook writers: Yordan Hadzhi Konstantinov-Dzhinot from Veles, Parteniya Zografski from Galichnik, Dimitar and Konstantin Miladinov from Struga, Kuzman Shapkarev from Ohrid, Marko Tsepenkov from Prilep and Stefan Verkovich.

The publication in Zagreb in 1861 (with material assistance from the Croatian Bishop Josip Juraj Strossmayer) of the Collection of Macedonian folk poetry, riddles and customs made by Konstantin Miladinov was an event of prime importance both for Macedonian culture and for the culture of the other South Slav peoples. The appearance of modern Macedonian poetry is also linked to the name of Konstantin Miladinov. Outstanding among those who followed him in the field of literary activity in this period are Rayko Zhinzifov of Veles and Grigor Prlichev of Ohrid.

Prlichev's first poetry was written in Greek. His epic poem "The Sirdar" (Ἀρματωλός) was voted the best entry in the pan-Hellenic poetry competition of 1860 and was awarded the first prize. However the tragic deaths of the brothers Dimitar and Konstantin Miladinov in Constantinople in 1862 caused a rupture in his activity and converted him into a burning crusader against Hellenism in Macedonia. Preoccupied by the idea of a single pan-Slavonic language and culture he attempted to write in a language composed of elements from Macedonian, Bulgarian and Old Church Slavonic but his attempt was destined to failure.

The spirit of the new age was expressed not only in literature but also in art, and in architecture in particular. Financed largely by town craftsmen, monastery pavilions (chardak) and guest rooms which served as rest rooms during monastery festivals were built.

The master-craftsmen of Prilep, Veles, Krushevo, Bitola and Strumitsa were particularly distinguished. The mastercraftsmen Stoyan Vzenko and Tinche and the painters Nikola Mihailovich and Kosta Anastasievich were especially outstanding.

There were also noteworthy changes at this time in urban architecture. The building began of houses with a modern type of construction and with richly decorated ceilings. The best examples of this can still be seen today in Ohrid, Krushevo, Titov Veles, Bitola and Kratovo.

Religious subjects continued to dominate the field of painting but it was not of any outstanding quality.

## EXPRESSIONS OF NATIONALISM AND STRUGGLES FOR FREEDOM IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

### REVOLTS AND UPRISINGS

#### *The Razlovtsi Uprising and Unrest in Other Parts of Macedonia*

Despite its efforts to adapt to the achievements of modern development the Ottoman socio-political system was not capable of ridding itself swiftly and efficaciously of out-dated social relations. Instead, the Ottoman Empire fell increasingly into economic and political dependence upon the developed capitalist states, which gave rise to ever more acute social, national and political relations within the Empire. The subject peoples of the Balkans, on the other hand, entered upon the phase of national revolutionary struggles in the seventies of the nineteenth century. The European part of the Ottoman Empire was subject as never before to internal unrest and revolts of its subject peoples who fought with force of arms to free themselves from Ottoman bondage.

The Macedonian people felt the economic and political oppression of the Ottoman State keenly. They were then undergoing the same development as the other Balkan peoples who came under Ottoman rule. In Macedonia too preparations were being made for an armed settling of scores with the alien bondage. Particularly distinguished in this connection were the teachers Arseni Kostentsev and Mihail Kovachev from Shtip, Ivan Hadzhi Nikolaov from Kukush (Kilkis), Dimitar Pop-Georgiev from Berovo, Isiah Radev Mazhovski from Lazaropole and Stoyan Vezenkov from Krushevo.

Secret groups and committees were set up in various places in Macedonia, including Prilep, Ohrid, Kukush (Kilkis), Shtip, Gorna Dzhumaya, Veles, Salonika, Voden (Edessa) and Razlovtsi (a village on the upper stretch of the River Bregalnitsa). According to the testimony of the merchant Hadzhi Tasho the group in Voden (Edessa) numbered in 1873 fifteen persons and had at its disposal

two hundred liras for the purchase of gunpowder and weapons with which to make ready for battle.

Although this internal unrest involved a large part of Macedonia, for a number of reasons it found expression not in a universal uprising of the Macedonian people but in a peasants' revolt in the village of Razlovtsi in the Piyanets district.

It was intended that this uprising should break out in the areas of Malesh, Strumitsa, Petrich and Melnik. Instead, because of inexperience and unforeseen factors, the rebels, led by Dimitar Pop-Georgiev and the village priest Stoyan, were forced to commence their armed action prematurely, on 7th May 1876, in Razlovtsi, from which it took its name. After initial success in which the representatives of Ottoman authority were driven out of the village, Berovski set out with one of the two bands to raise the remainder of the population. However, a swift counter-attack by the Ottoman authorities thwarted Berovski's plan from the very outset. Wounded in a skirmish and with his band scattered he was compelled to withdraw to the mountains and the rebel village was left to the mercy of the Ottoman army and bashibazouks.

The attempted uprising of 1876 in the village of Razlovtsi was unsuccessful but the courage it evoked prefaced the later national revolutionary struggles of the Macedonian people. Their fighting experience in this engagement proved of value to Berovski and his band in the Kresnen Uprising of 1878.

### *Wars Against the Ottoman Empire*

The growth of dissatisfaction among the subject peoples in seventies of the nineteenth century led to large-scale uprisings in Bosnia and Hercegovina in 1875 and in Bulgaria in 1876. This widespread internal unrest in the Balkans could not but affect the domestic and the foreign situation of the Ottoman Empire. Representatives of the Young Turk bourgeois liberal movement, led by the vali Mithad Pasha, caused changes at court which brought Abdul Hamid II to the throne.

The changes that took place at the court in Constantinople were not sufficient to save the Ottoman Empire from foreign conflict. First of all, under the influence of the Bosnian Uprising, Serbia and Montenegro entered into war with the Ottoman Empire on 30th June, 1876. Meanwhile the Great Powers, acting in their own interests, exerted pressure on the Ottoman Empire to carry out more extensive reforms on the behalf of the subject peoples. Under British influence a conference of the European powers was summoned to meet in Constantinople in which Britain, Russia, Austria-Hungary, Germany, France and Italy would take part. The

aim of the Conference was to avoid a major armed conflict and to solve the Balkan problems in a peaceful fashion. On 22nd December, 1876 it put forward proposals to the Ottoman government: that it should introduce administrative autonomy in Bosnia and Hercegovina; that Bulgaria and Macedonia should come under the control of the Great Powers; and that Serbia and Montenegro should be allowed a certain territorial expansion at the expense of the Ottoman state.

Turkey however rejected these proposals and on 23rd December 1876 announced that she was introducing a constitutional administration of the country and declared that any further work on the part of the Constantinople Conference was therefore groundless.

The introduction of the Constitution in the Ottoman Empire was regarded as an ordinary political move to reduce international pressure, and this soon proved to be the case. Parliamentary elections were, in fact, held and a parliament with two chambers was formed. The Macedonian merchant Dimitar Robev of Bitola was elected to the parliament and another Macedonian, Gyeorgyi Chakarov of Struga, was elected to the senate. However, this new institution remained without any influence on the internal development of the country whatsoever. Such was its state when, in March 1878, it was abolished.

In fact, the proclamation of the constitution did not prevent military conflict with Russia. On 23rd April 1877 Russia declared war on the Ottoman Empire and was joined in this by Serbia and Montenegro.

### *The San Stefano Peace Treaty and Its Revision at the Congress of Berlin*

In the war against Russia the Ottoman Empire suffered total military defeat in the Balkans. The outcome of this defeat was the signing, on 3rd March 1878, of the San Stefano Peace Treaty. This treaty seriously reduced the Balkan territories of the Ottoman state.

According to the Treaty of San Stefano the territories of Serbia, Montenegro and Rumania were increased and they were proclaimed independent. Reforms were introduced in Bosnia and Hercegovina and a Organic Constitution was drawn up for Crete and for Thessaly.

On extremely important decision of the Peace Treaty signed at San Stefano was the decision to create an autonomous Bulgarian state within the boundaries of which there would fall territo-

ries outside Bulgaria itself, namely the Vranje District of Serbia, Korça in Albania and the whole of Macedonia.

In its attempt to ensure Russian influence in the Balkans and the Mediterranean through the creation of Bulgaria, Czarist Russia took no account of the interests of the other Balkan peoples. However, the Great European Powers were not satisfied with the treaty. Austria-Hungary saw Bulgaria as a factor destructive to her interests in the Balkans and above all as a severing of her systematic penetration towards Salonika. Germany interpreted the clauses of the treaty in an almost identical fashion. Britain saw in it a threat to her domination in the Mediterranean. The Treaty of San Stefano also created dissatisfaction among the neighbouring Balkan states of Serbia and Greece who both had aspirations towards Macedonia.

Subjected to pressure and exhausted by the war, Russia agreed to a revision of the Treaty of San Stefano. Even before the Great Powers conferred in Berlin she had tried to reach certain arrangements with Austria-Hungary by which a separate, autonomous principality should be formed from the territories of Macedonia and the sanjak of Novi Pazar. Austria-Hungary, however, rejected this proposal.

The Congress of Berlin sat from 13th June to 13th July 1878. It altered the decisions of the San Stefano Treaty in many respects and in so doing changed the consequences of the Russo-Turkish War. In accordance with the decisions of the Congress Serbia, Montenegro and Rumania were declared independent. Bosnia and Hercegovina were surrendered to Austro-Hungarian occupation. Bulgaria was divided into two parts: the autonomous principality of Bulgaria, which stretched from the Danube to Stara Planina, and the autonomous district of Eastern Rumelia. Macedonia was once more placed under the rule of the Sultan. Section Twenty-three of the Treaty, which envisaged the implementation of reforms in Macedonia, was particularly significant.

The solution of the Congress of Berlin by which Macedonia was returned under the rule of the Ottoman Empire represented an injustice to the Macedonian people. The clauses of the San Stefano Treaty had certainly been no less profound an injustice.

The Macedonian people had expressed their aspirations towards freedom by participation in the wars. On the outbreak of the Serbo-Turkish War, and even more on the outbreak of the Russo-Turkish War, large numbers of Macedonian economic emigrants joined the Serbian and Russian armies as volunteers. In the Russian army there were about four hundred such volunteers. From them several bands were formed which were called People's or Volunteer's Bands. Some of them were led by Macedonians such as Ilyo Maleshevski, Georgi Pulevski and Captain Georgi

Antonov. In Macedonia itself there were more active movements on the part of the mass of the people. The activity of the outlaw bands, particularly that of Dimitar Berovski, whose activity had not ceased with the Razlovtsi Uprising, was revived. When the Russian army came close to Küstendil volunteers led by Ilyo Maleshevski joined it. With a common aim they eliminated the remnants of Turkish rule from Malesh and formed their own local self-governing administration which operated for about two months. At the same time, on the signing of the truce in January 1878, Macedonian volunteers, led by Nikola Algunski and Yakim Cholopechki, who had joined the Serbian army, entered the districts of Kriva Palanka and Kumanovo. There they raised the population to rebellion. Thanks to help in the form of arms from the Serbian army the rebels' number rose to between three and four thousand, and the revolt spread to all the surrounding districts. Immediately upon the signing of the San Stefano Peace Treaty the Ottoman authorities took extremely energetic measures against them. They first did away with the liberated territory in Piyanets and then, at the beginning of June, with that in the districts of Kumanovo and Kriva Palanka.

The desire of the Macedonian people for independence, for their own statehood, finally found expression not only in force of arms but on a diplomatic plane. Even before the Congress of Berlin Dimitar Robev of Bitola, who had been a representative in the Ottoman Parliament, had gone to Belgrade. There he established contact with emigrants from Macedonia and also with the President of the Serbian Government, Jovan Ristich, with Metropolitan Mihailo of Belgrade and with other political figures. At all these meetings Robev declared himself opposed to the aims of the chauvinistic propaganda of the neighbouring bourgeoisies and states to incorporate Macedonia into their territories and devoted his energies to the creation of an independent Macedonia. For Robev "Macedonia could not belong to any of the three principal peoples of the Balkan Peninsula."

Although not a single one of the above-mentioned actions on behalf of Macedonia in this period succeeded they underlined unambiguously the Macedonian people's fundamental striving for the creation of an independent state organisation of their own. The decisions of the Peace Treaty of San Stefano to incorporate Macedonia within Bulgaria and, to an even greater extent, the decisions of the Congress of Berlin were a profound injustice towards the Macedonian people.

### *The Kresnen Uprising and Other Movements in Macedonia*

The continuation of Ottoman rule in accordance with the decisions of the Congress of Berlin, in spite of Article Twenty-three of the Berlin Treaty, placed the Macedonian people in an even more difficult situation than that in which they had been before the wars. In addition to a general decline in economic activity and increased terrorism and plundering both by the legal representatives of the government and by the numerous bands of *kaçacı* (plundering deserters), particularly in Western Macedonia, the Macedonian people had to bear the burden of the upkeep of an enormous mass of Turkish refugees (*muhadziri*) whose numbers immediately after the war reached a figure of over a hundred thousand. At the same time Ottoman armies, whose upkeep weighed heavy on the people, were stationed on Macedonian territory. To all of this was added the Greek clergy's reign of terror.

From a psychological point of view the solution put forward by the Congress of Berlin was an immense disillusionment to the Macedonian people, not only in view of the decision of the San Stefano Peace Treaty but also in view of the proposals of the Constantinople Conference of 1876 regarding the introduction of autonomy in Macedonia. Consequently the decisions of the Congress of Berlin were greeted in Macedonia with a wave of disappointment, bitterness and explosions of revolt.

The news of the intention of the Great Western Powers, as expressed at the Congress, that Macedonia should continue within the framework of the Ottoman Empire, and the likelihood that the Congress would ratify this intention in its decision, stimulated bitterness throughout the whole of Macedonia and led to a renewal of the activities of the outlaw bands.

The decisions of the Congress of Berlin caused reactions in the various Balkan states. They were received with dissatisfaction by the Bulgarian bourgeoisie and clergy who were thus deprived of Macedonia. The Greek government expressed its dissatisfaction by the despatch of armed bands into Macedonia.

Shortly after the conclusion of the Congress of Berlin fifty or sixty eminent Macedonian emigrés in contact with the Exarchate circles in Bulgaria assembled with the aim of discovering a way out of the newly created situation. During the discussion which took place at this meeting the idea was put forward of despatching a request to Austria to take Macedonia under her protection. This suggestion was blocked, however, through the intervention of the Bulgarian Exarch and the Commander of the Russian Army in Bulgaria. The meeting concluded that support should be sought from the royal courts of Europe and a special request made to the Russian

Czar to take Macedonia under his protection. The meeting also decided to form benevolent committees for the collection of aid for Macedonia.

While the Macedonians in Bulgaria were engaged in this activity the Bulgarian bourgeoisie made a move towards definite action. The Unity Committee was founded in Plovdiv under the leadership of Stefan Stambolov, a famous Bulgarian revolutionary and future President of the Bulgarian Government. Under the guise of voluntary activities in the interests of Macedonia the aim of the Committee was to gather together and organise the Macedonian militia men and all those who were ready to fight and to send them into Macedonia. There they would incite the dissatisfied elements to a revolt against Ottoman bondage which would then be represented as a desire for unification with Bulgaria. The activities of the Unity Committee were extended throughout the whole of Bulgaria. The most important part was played by the Committee in Sofia. It co-ordinated the work of the other Committees, particularly those which dealt directly with armed actions and with the Küstendil and Dupnitsa (Stanke Dimitrov) Committees which had precisely defined duties. The Küstendil Committee was to superintend the actions of the bands along the line from Kriva Palanka to Kumanovo, Skopje and beyond and the Dupnitsa (Stanke Dimitrov) Committee those along the courses of the Rivers Struma (Strymon) and Mesta (Nestos) towards the Aegean Sea. Its most important task was to take the Rupel Pass and thus sever the routes from Serres to Dupnitsa (Stanke Dimitrov) and from Serres to Skopje.

The entire task of organising armed actions in Macedonia was entrusted to Metropolitan Nathaniel of Ohrid. He had under his command a large number of former Macedonian volunteers. In September 1878, after extensive organizational preparations, an attempt was made from Küstendil to infiltrate a band into Macedonia but this met with failure.

During this period armed resistance to Ottoman bondage was most marked in the districts of Malesh and along the River Struma (Strymon) in Eastern Macedonia. In the summer of 1878 a genuinely spontaneous uprising flared up in this area. In view of this one of Nathaniel's primary concerns was to establish contact with the leaders of this internal movement, in particular with Ilyo Maleshevski and with Dimitar Pop-Georgiev Berovski. After consultations with them at the Monastery of Rila on 8th September 1878, and afterwards with the leaders of the local bands in Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad), a decision was taken to unite all the bands under the command of Stoyan Karastoilov from the village of Starchishta near Nevrokop. It was also decided at these consultations to begin with actions in the region of the Kresnen Gorge.

The uprising started on 5th October (old style) 1878 with an attack by about four hundred insurgents on the garrison stationed in the village of Kresna. After a lengthy battle the entire Ottoman garrison of a hundred and nineteen soldiers and two officers was captured. Following this success the revolt spread rapidly along both left and right banks of the River Struma (Strymon). The rebels reached the immediate vicinity of both Berovo and Petrich and a group of them blockaded the town of Melnik.

After these initial successes registered by the insurgents changes were effected in the organisation of the uprising. Under pressure from the Unity Committee the Cossack Ivan Kalmikov, called ataman (hetman) was appointed as Commander of the Revolt and Dimitar Pop-Georgiev as its Chief-of-Staff. A police force was also organised to preserve law and order in the liberated territory.

The uprising was greeted with enthusiasm by Macedonians both inside and outside the country. The influx of rebels was so great that the supply of arms could not keep pace with it. Dimitar Pop-Georgiev requested between two and three thousand rifles but he always received minimal quantities which led to the first conflict between the local leadership of the revolt and the Unity Committee. Macedonian emigrants in Rumania collected aid for the rebels and emphasised that they were delighted with their aim, the creation of their own Macedonian state. Macedonians in Serbia sought permission from the President of the Government to return to their homeland and raise a rebellion.

However, together with these successes came the first conflicts between the rebels and the representatives of the Unity Committee which were to have tragic consequences.

Seeing the uprising as a means towards the liberation of Macedonia, the internal forces tried to ensure that the rebel actions developed systematically. The leadership of the Unity Committee for its part was in favour of such actions as would create the impression that revolts were breaking out all over Macedonia, which would suit its propaganda. This inevitably led to conflict. The representatives of the Committee were excluded from the leadership of the revolt which thus came completely into the hands of the internals. This made relationships even more tense. Not being prepared to allow the leadership of the rebellion to slip out of its grip, the Committee took energetic measures to reinstate its representatives among the leadership in Kresna, employing drastic means. To ensure their control of the insurrection the Committee's representatives took Berovski prisoner and executed the leader Stoyan. A crisis in the ranks of the insurgents ensued. Exploiting the clashes among the rebels, the Ottoman army retook the liberated territories to the left of the River Struma (Strymon).

With the elimination of the internal leadership of the Kresna Uprising, the Unity Committee took the command into its own hands. Pursuing its tactics of encouraging outbreaks of unrest in several places, it ordered that an attack be made on the town of Bansko, in the Razlog basin, on 8th November 1878. In the initial assault the Ottoman troops were driven out of Bansko but the rebels did not succeed in taking control of the whole basin. Despite the brave resistance of the local population, the action in the Razlog district collapsed after nine days.

There was a danger that the uprising in the Kresna sector would collapse completely because of internal quarrelling. This drove Nathaniel to send the captured Berovski back to the territory. Returning to the rebel ranks Berovski concentrated his attention on the Karshiyak sector which, with neighbouring Malesh, had long been a centre of armed action against Ottoman rule in this part of Macedonia. Berovski organised a rebel peasant authority in the territory. Its power depended upon a peasants' people's army which operated ten day shifts, alternately working and guarding the liberated territory.

However, Berovski was not to remain in the ranks of the insurgents for long. He was captured once again by agents of the Unity Committee and debarred forever from the uprising. After this the rebellion was completely subordinated to the requirements of Bulgarian state policy. Firstly, the leadership was moved to the camp of the voluntary bands situated in the Küstendil region, and, secondly, both this and the liberated territory in Karshiyak were used for propaganda purposes and for the despatch of protest telegrams to the Constitutional Assembly of Bulgaria.

When the political motives for supporting the rebel actions ceased to exist and when the Russian government, under pressure from Britain and the other Great Powers, decisively declared itself opposed to any further conflict in Macedonia and in favour of the implementation of the decisions of the Congress of Berlin, the leadership of the Committee discarded the watchword of the creation of a rebel organisation in Macedonia itself and the infiltration into it of volunteer bands. All this had simply been a manoeuvre to eliminate the Uprising. By the end of April 1879 the Ottoman army had regained control of the liberated territory. Towards the end of May of the same year the bands on Bulgarian territory were dissolved. With this all actions and plans connected with the Kresna Uprising came to an end. As a popular uprising and armed resistance on the part of the Macedonia people to Ottoman bondage it had in fact ceased to exist at the time when its internal leadership was eliminated.

Hotbeds of rebellion against the decisions of the Congress of Berlin developed in other parts of the country as well as in Eastern



Macedonia where the Kresnen Uprising had broken out. Evidence points to the fact that the territory between Bitola, Korcë and Kostur (Castoria) was another centre of rebel activities as was also the territory between Kozhani, Berroea, Katerini and Voden (Edessa). However the Kresnen Uprising was outstanding among all these for its strength, individuality and aspirations towards an independent life. In essence it was a phase of armed resistance, the first stage of national revolution on the path towards the formation of a revolutionary organisation, a stage at whose very outset were expressed all the characteristics of the Macedonian national revolutionary movement. The struggle against Bulgarian and all other threats to Macedonia's individuality developed together with the struggle against Ottoman bondage.

The Kresnen Uprising had been stifled – the Great Powers contributing not inconsiderably, Britain particularly having committed herself both directly and through her extension of material aid to the Ottoman Empire. But internal unrest in Macedonia did not cease. This was especially the case in Western Macedonia where new bands were formed under the leadership of volunteers who had returned from the wars. The foundations of a conspiracy were laid which involved a considerable section of Macedonia, from Kichevo and Prilep in the north to Bitola and Ohrid in the south. The conspirators' preparations continued through 1879 into 1880 but in 1881 they were discovered by the Ottoman authorities and the plot was crushed.

#### WORSENING OF THE SITUATION OF THE MACEDONIAN PEOPLE AND LARGE-SCALE ECONOMIC EMIGRATION

##### *Economic Regression*

In the seventies of the nineteenth century and particularly after the Congress of Berlin Macedonian economic life experienced a rapid decline. The factors influencing this were numerous but chief among them was the continual decline of the Ottoman economy which depended upon European capitalist creditors. The Ottoman economy and finances were brought under their control by the enforcement of the Muharrem Decree of 1881 and an opportunity for even greater penetration was created. The Decree exposed the Ottoman Empire to exploitation of the crudest sort. Its aim was that the Empire should be a source supplying West European industry with raw materials and a market for the placement of its

industrial products. This put the country in a permanently passive situation in its commercial exchange with other countries and so further pledges had to be made to its foreign creditors.

The Ottoman Empire's economic dependence on foreign capital had harsh consequences internally, especially in Macedonia. The towns were the first to feel these. The activity of the centres of local craftsmanship and manufacturing in which the Macedonian element dominated were quickly suffocated by the influx of factory-produced goods. A consequence of this was a decline in the towns themselves.

The economic regression was, however, keenly felt in the agricultural economy too. About eighty per cent of the population lived in villages and was engaged in agriculture and about fifty per cent of the urban population relied on agriculture. Of the total workable land surface of Macedonia only about twenty per cent was tilled, while in Bulgaria the proportion was 33.6 and in Serbia 37.8 per cent. The general decline in the Ottoman Empire which came with the wars and the existence of the chiflik agrarian system led to a further loss in the economic potential of the rural population. Out of the hundred and eighty thousand agricultural homesteads existing in Macedonia at the beginning of the twentieth century only twenty-five thousand owned large or medium-sized and ten thousand small-scale land-holding. The remainder of the population was forced to work on chiflik soil which did not belong to them. Ethnically the majority of the population who worked on the chifliks was Macedonian.

The chiflik system of land-holding was at this time undergoing a period of stagnation. Because of the persistence of feudal relations and the primitive method of exploitation of the soil, this concentration of land in the hands of the chiflik owners meant that there was no growth in agricultural production despite the fact that Macedonia's most fertile plains were chiflik properties.

Such as it was the agricultural economy of Macedonia was burdened by innumerable tax contributions. Because of the inadequate development of the other branches of the economy, agriculture remained the largest source for meeting the state's budget requirements. The largest item in the budget was land tax, which varied from four to ten per cent of the value of all the worked land, and tax on income from the land (tax and tithes), which varied from 16.5 per cent to 22.5 per cent.

In addition to the amount of taxation the manner in which taxes were collected was a particular burden to the Macedonian tax-payers. The gathering of taxes was leased out by the state. The lessees hired armed escorts of eight to ten persons and adopted a complete system of terrorisation in order to extort as much as they could from the peasants. All of this, added to the insecurity of pro-

perty tenure, led to the peasants' working only as much land as was necessary for the satisfaction of their own family needs. They were not obliged to pay tax on unworked land.

Political insecurity increased Macedonia's economic instability. After the wars it became an arena for the activities of pillaging bands which in places had as many as two to four hundred members. The object of their attacks was to plunder as much as they could, carrying it off and selling it, and even going so far as taking the people themselves for whom they demanded enormous ransoms. No one could withstand these bands. The whole of Macedonia, and the western section in particular – the districts of Ohrid, Debar and Kostur (Castoria) – was the empire of such brigands. Their effrontery reached such lengths that they entered Salonika, Bitola, Krushevo, Resen and Ohrid in broad daylight and in Lerin (Florina) they even captured the Vice-vizier. Pillaging in Macedonia reached its peak at the end of 1886 when all other activity was paralysed. This led to intervention on the part of the Bitola Vali who resorted to the organisation of a people's militia manned by the local village population. Its members were known as faris. The faris were given extensive rights in the matter of prosecuting bandits. Thanks to this relative order was established in the territory of the Bitola Vilayet in the course of two years. The Ottoman feudal class, however, did not look amiably on the activity of the faris and managed to replace the Vali who had initiated their formation. Consequently banditry broke out again in this part of Macedonia. In fact lawlessness never ceased for a moment in this period. Insofar as its intensity decreased in one area it increased in others.

### *Increase in Economic Emigration*

The difficult economic position, outlawry, usury and the tax system – in a word the entire situation – contributed to an increase in economic emigration from Macedonia. Not unknown in earlier periods, this emigration now assumed massive proportions. In their search for work and peace peasants and their families set out towards Salonika, Constantinople and Smyrna, and even more moved abroad to Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Rumania and, to a lesser extent, to Austria-Hungary and even to France. Between seventy and a hundred thousand people left Macedonia annually, not returning for two or three years. When they did return they frequently fell prey to outlaw bands or to money-lenders who, with their high rates of interest, virtually stripped them.

Nevertheless, Macedonia's economic and political instability after the wars of 1876/78 was not able to halt the albeit slow re-

structuring of production, trade and communications and the consequent social forces. The existing chiflik system and even more the surplus of labour in agriculture led to the creation of strata within the agricultural population. On the one hand there were the richer peasants and on the other the landless from whose numbers were recruited domestic labour, agricultural workers and the lumpen proletariat of the towns. The introduction of railways altered the structure of communications which, in turn, affected the growth of the economic centres. Particularly rapid growth was apparent in Salonika, Skopje and Bitola, which gradually developed into the economic, administrative, political and cultural centres of Macedonia. The creation of processing, service, extractive and other types of industry led to the emergence of a working class.

## FOREIGN PROPAGANDA AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

After the Congress of Berlin the situation was further complicated by the stepping-up of propaganda by the neighbouring Balkan states and by certain religious organisations. The neighbouring countries developed a vast propaganda which was aimed at halting the historical growth of the Macedonian people, or rather at channelling it in the direction of their own interests. It was based on the interests of their bourgeoisies in the rich plains of Macedonia and on the specific situation of Macedonia in the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly in regard to its considerable ethnic mixture of Macedonians, Turks, Greeks, Vlachs, Albanians, Jews, Gypsies, etc. A basis for these claims was sought in 'historical right'.

Churches and schools were used as a means towards this end. They were the factors most certain to effect a denationalisation of the Macedonian people.

### *Greater Greek Propaganda*

Greek propaganda, which by the time of the wars of 1876/78 had lost a great many of its positions in Macedonia, found conditions favourable to an extension of its activity after the Congress of Berlin. Exploiting the bitterness within the Ottoman Empire over the defeats suffered and the terror which had been introduced, particularly after the Kresnen Uprising and other anti-Otto-

man demonstrations in Macedonia, Greek propaganda went into the attack using means of every kind to regain its earlier positions. In this it had the full support of the Ottoman authorities. On recommendations from the agents of Greek propaganda the authorities arrested, imprisoned, sentenced and punished every Macedonian who has summoned up sufficient energy to oppose the invasion of Greek propaganda.

Greek propaganda activity during this period was notable for its multifarious character. Under direct control from Athens widespread propaganda activity was developed on the international plan. Its basic aim was to convince world public opinion of Greece's right to Macedonia.

Entrusting the organisation of propaganda in Macedonia itself to its consulates, the Greek government made use of all the means which it had at its disposal: on the one hand it used terrorism and espionage and on the other it founded a large number of different educational institutions and organisations whose underlying purpose was the efficient propagation of the Greek language, Greek literacy and consciousness.

As a result of this activity there was in 1886 a total of eight hundred and forty-six Greek schools in Macedonia, including three teachers' training schools, the boys' and the girls' gymnasia in Bitola and theological seminaries, which had a total of forty-five thousand pupils.

However, the entire success enjoyed by Greek propaganda in the years after the Russo-Turkish War and the Kresnen Uprising was dependent upon the support of the Ottoman government. From the nineties of the nineteenth century the Ottoman authorities began to withdraw this support, putting a halt to terrorism and behaving more tolerantly towards the Exarchate and other rival forms of propaganda. From this time onwards Greek propaganda began to lose ground rapidly in Macedonia.

### *Greater Serbian Propaganda*

In contrast to Greater Greek propaganda, organised Greater Serbian propaganda in Macedonia dated from 1868. Up to the Congress of Berlin, however, it was not precisely defined. Only after the Congress and particularly after the signing of the secret convention of 1881 with Austria-Hungary, which closed the doors of Bosnia and Hercegovina to Serbia, did she turn her attention more seriously towards Macedonia. Her first steps were requests to open Serbian schools in Macedonia and to establish Serbian bishoprics in Skopje, Veles, Debar, Bitola and Ohrid.

After the Serbo-Bulgarian War of 1885 Serbia devoted herself to a systematic expansion of propaganda in Macedonia. A special organisation, the St. Sava Association, was founded in 1886 to which the spreading of Serbian schools in Macedonia was entrusted. Diplomatic activity also increased. Serbia succeeded in securing the signing of a consular convention with the Ottoman Empire which enabled her to establish her own consulates in Salonika, Skopje (1887) and Bitola (1888).

In the eighties of the nineteenth century, not as yet reinforced as were Greece and Bulgaria by having their own churches established within the Ottoman Empire Serbian propaganda sought the collaboration of those Macedonian circles which were dissatisfied with both the Patriarchate and the Exarchate and were striving to realise their own Macedonian policy of educational and religious independence. It offered them support in order to infiltrate more easily into Macedonia. Thus, towards the close of the eighties, representatives of the Serbian government established contact with a 'Secret Macedonian Committee' in Sofia. They agreed to collaborate on the following basic projects: 1) The reinstatement of the Ohrid Archbishopric under the tutelage of the Patriarchate of Constantinople; 2) the publication in Constantinople of a newspaper in Macedonian to be called *Македонски глас* (Macedonian Voice); 3) the founding of schools in Macedonia to which teachers who would teach in the vernacular language would be appointed; 4) the publication in Macedonian of textbooks and other books to satisfy the needs of Macedonian schools and the people.

The attempts to secure a position in Macedonia through the above-mentioned circles were extended in 1889 by the publication of a primer and reading book in Constantinople in which two-thirds of the texts were in Macedonian and one third in Serbian.

However, as its foothold in Macedonia became more firm Serbian propaganda reduced its assistance to the Macedonian forces which were striving for independence. From 1890 onwards it followed in its rivals' footsteps by handing over the responsibility for propaganda activity to the Foreign Ministry in Belgrade and to the newly-opened consulates in Macedonia and by continually increasing the funds available for propaganda from year to year. Consequently at the beginning of the twentieth century there were two hundred and seventeen Serbian schools in Macedonia with a total of 9,179 pupils.

### *Greater Bulgarian Propaganda*

Greater Bulgarian propaganda in Macedonia had an advantage over its rivals. Situated until 1878 within the same state boundaries and waging a joint struggle with the Macedonian people for spiritual liberation from the Greek Patriarchate, the Bulgarian bourgeoisie had at the same time the opportunity to extend its influence throughout Macedonia. On its creation in 1870 the Exarchate had assumed the rôle of the exclusive leader of the church and school struggle not merely in Bulgaria but also in Macedonia, and has strangled every independent activity of the Macedonian forces.

From its formation in 1878 the Bulgarian state assumed the entire initiative for the spreading of Greater Bulgarian propaganda in Macedonia. Although not yet organisationally stabilised or reinforced economically, it aimed its first concern towards Macedonia, for the realisation of the Treaty of San Stefano. As early as 1882 the President of the Bulgarian Government, Stoilov, prepared a concrete programme for the policy of the Bulgarian state in Macedonia. This programme was based on instilling into Macedonians the feeling and consciousness that they were Bulgarian and that 'the Principality is the most natural and active guardian of Macedonia', and on convincing them that 'in Sofia people are concerned about their fate, both present and future'. To achieve this goal the Bulgarian government employed the following methods: 1) the development of Bulgarian schooling in Macedonia on as wide a scale as possible (to which end the Exarchate set up a special commission); 2) the introduction of uniformity into the organisation of the church and school districts in Macedonia – in practice this meant the end of self-government in church and school districts; 3) the creation in Macedonia of an organisation whose brief was to keep up to date on all matters; and 4) the linking of the Bulgarian and Macedonian railway systems.

Like that of the other states Bulgarian propaganda concentrated chiefly on school and church activity. For the development of this Bulgaria set aside 100,000 levs in 1881. By 1885 the sum had reached the figure of 574,874 levs and was increased annually after that. Thanks to the funds invested in educational activity there were, in the school year 1899/1900, 1,053 elementary and grade schools in Macedonia attended by 25,994 pupils and 13,460 children below school age.

In church affairs, Bulgaria obtained permission in 1890 for the reinstatement of its Metropolitans in the Skopje, Veles and Ohrid Eparchies and was later granted a decree of the Sultan which allowed the establishment of new Metropolitans in Nevrokop (1894), Bitola, Debar and Strumitsa (1897).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, in the academic year 1899/1900, these three Balkan states, Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria (excluding Rumania which only came on the scene at a later date) maintained for propaganda purposes some 2,116 schools in Macedonia with a total of 71,000 pupils. The underlying aim of these educational institutions was to turn Macedonian children into Greeks, Serbs or Bulgarian. Saturated by the nationalistic spirit of such propaganda it was expected that they themselves would carry on the activity in their own country, thus destroying the national unity of the Macedonian people.

### *Other Propaganda in Macedonia*

Apart from the above-mentioned propaganda by the neighbouring Balkan states, both Catholic and Protestant organisations were active in the field of propaganda in Macedonia in this period.

A detailed plan for the development of Catholic propaganda activity, founded on respect for the vernacular language and local customs, was drawn up on the basis of the reports of the emissaries, Paolo Purlang and Giovanni Battista Botca, who visited Macedonia in 1879. This, together with the powerful protection they had behind them vis-a-vis the Ottoman authorities, enabled the number of adherents to the Catholic faith to reach 3,950 households with a total of 20,000 members by 1886.

Protestant propaganda too found scope to further its activities in Macedonia. Led by missionaries from Britain and America, it concentrated on the Eastern Macedonian districts of Razlog, Nevrokop and the valley of the Rivers Struma (Strymon) and Strumeshnitsa and, to a certain extent, on Bitola. The first Protestant district was established in Bansko in 1871.

A fierce struggle to attract adherents grew up among the various forms of foreign propaganda. Bribery was used and promises of large payments and other privileges were made in order to gain persons who enjoyed popular authority and to attract disciples.

### *Resistance to Propaganda*

Despite the pressures exerted on them by the regime and the propagandists and despite the difficult social conditions which prevailed, the Macedonian people were not prepared to reconcile themselves to the offensive activities of foreign propaganda itself. Thus, for example, the struggle against the activity in Macedonia

of the Patriarchate of Constantinople had begun as early as the first half of the nineteenth century.

The appearance in Macedonia of Greater Serbian propaganda also aroused a reaction among the people. The ferocity of this opposition did not, however, equal the intensity of the struggle against Greek and Bulgarian propaganda. This was because Serbian propaganda during this period was relatively weak and also its tactics were to go along with the national aspirations of the Macedonian people.

The fight against Bulgarian propaganda in Macedonia deserves particular attention.

Until the creation of the Bulgarian state circumstances had united the Macedonian and Bulgarian peoples in their struggle against foreign spiritual and political overlordship. Resistance began immediately upon the attempt of certain Bulgarian circles to impart to the social processes a direction which served the interests of Bulgarian aspirations in Macedonia. From the middle of the nineteenth century, when the attempt to give a Bulgarian character to the Macedonian people's struggle against Greek spiritual and Ottoman political oppression began to grow, so too did the resistance to this attempt. The Bulgarian poet and public figure Petko R. Slaveykov depicted this resistance vividly. In 1870 he published an article entitled "The Macedonian Question" in the newspaper *Македонија* (Macedonia). In this he wrote of the unwillingness of the Macedonians themselves to be called Bulgarians and to have their children taught Bulgarian.

On its establishment the Bulgarian Exarchate became the principal proponent of Greater Bulgarian propaganda in Macedonia. Its underlying purpose was to concentrate in its own hands the control of the church and of education and to subordinate them to the interests of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie. In the execution of this task the Exarchate completely strangled all Macedonian self-government. Hence the struggle against Bulgarian propaganda in Macedonia was chiefly directed against the Exarchate and its efforts at domination. From the outset this resistance to the Exarchate's intention of imposing itself as the one and only leader of the church and school life of the Macedonian people assumed extensive proportions. Thus, at the beginning of January 1874, six Macedonian districts – Solun (Salonika), Doyran, Voden (Edessa), Kukush (Kilkis), Strumitsa and Maleshevo – decided to secede from the Exarchate and to enter into a Union with the Papacy as the most certain means of expressing their independence. This movement expanded particularly in the sanjak of Serres. Its main proponent was the candidate for the post of arch-priest in the newly-founded Metropolitan See of Melnik, Serres, Drama and Nevrokop, the priest Charyton.

According to the account of the Bulgarian poet Petko R. Slaveykov, the essence of anti-Exarchate activity lay in dissatisfaction with the manner in which the church question was being solved in Bulgarian interests, dissatisfaction with the imposition of the Bulgarian language, opposition to the Exarchate church leaders, and a desire for the creation of a Macedonian church hierarchy and for the use of Macedonian in official communications.

The strength of the movement was such that even the aid of the Russian Ambassador to Constantinople, Count Ignatiev, was called upon. On 1st March, 1874 he visited Salonika and conferred there with certain of the movement's leaders. The results of this visit soon became apparent in Macedonia and shortly afterwards the movement began to decline.

Resistance to the imposition of Bulgarian propaganda in Macedonia did not cease with the formation of the Bulgarian state. It was expressed in attempts to preserve the autonomy of local church and school districts from the encroachment of the Bulgarian Exarchate. The action of the Prilep District in this respect was particularly strong. In the eighties of the nineteenth century it severed all links whatsoever with the school sector of the Exarchate in Constantinople. The Veles District reacted in a similar manner.

The reaction to Bulgarian infiltration into Macedonia was sharp and took many forms. In the schools and particularly in the Salonika Gymnasium a battle was waged between Macedonian teachers and those who had come from Bulgaria. This carried over to the pupils and was expressed in pupils' rebellions in the Salonika, Skopje and Bitola Exarchate Gymnasias. From the schools it gradually carried over to the entire youth of Macedonia and was directed against everyone and everything appertaining to the Exarchate: the bishops, teachers, priests and other officials. This opposition was especially fierce in the nineties of the nineteenth century. The first public societies and secret circles organised by Macedonian students were founded at this time. Their aim was to study history, culture, language and customs of the Macedonian people and also to wage a war upon foreign propaganda. Particularly noteworthy in this respect were the Macedonian Secret Committee founded in 1886 in Sofia, Gyorgyi Pulevski's Slav Macedonian Literary Association founded in 1888 in Sofia (whose activity was prohibited by the Bulgarian government which interned its members) and the Young Macedonian Literary Association led by Petar Pop Arsov and Gyorgyi Balashev. This last society began in 1892 to publish the periodical *Лоза* (Vine). Its purpose was to mobilize the Macedonian people against the harmful activity of foreign propaganda. The avowed aim of the periodical and its frequent use of the Macedonian language incurred the wrath of Bul-

garian critics and led to state intervention. The periodical was banned.

The attempt in 1891 by Theodosius, the Exarchate Metropolitan of Skopje, to create an autocephalous Macedonian church is of particular interest in relation to opposition to Bulgarian propaganda in Macedonia from the time of the formation of the Bulgarian state up to the appearance of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (IMRO). Theodosius, who was born in the village of Trlis near Nevrokop, had been one of those involved in the attempts of 1874 to establish an independent Macedonian church. When he became head of the Skopje Eparchy he began working systematically towards the secession of the Macedonian eparchies from the body of the Exarchate. With this end in view he met Bonetti, the representative of the Church of Rome in Constantinople, in Skopje on 3rd December, 1891. The following demands were set down as conditions for entry into the Union: the re-conferring of autocephalous status on the Archbishopric of Ohrid in canonical unity with the Church of Rome; the establishment of Theodosius himself at its head; the appointment, by Theodosius, of clergy of local origin; and the alignment of the boundaries of the Ohrid Archbishopric with those of the Macedonian Province. The Bulgarian Exarch's sharp reaction prevented the realisation of this plan. With the help of the Ottoman authorities he had Theodosius arrested, conveyed under escort to Constantinople and transferred thence to Bulgaria. Exiled to a monastery, he remained there until his death.

## EDUCATION, CULTURE AND ART

### *Cultural and educational life up to the Young Turk Revolution*

Despite the tendency to produce teachers who would be faithful servants of foreign propaganda, the intensive growth of educational activity in Macedonia from the eighties of the nineteenth century onwards made possible the emergence of a considerable intelligentsia. In the nineties it was to become the prime mover of social activity in the country and above all of aspirations towards national liberation.

In the cultural field the tradition of publishing the wealth of popular folklore, established by the Miladinov brothers, continued. Kuzman Shapkarev of Ohrid and Marko Tsepenskov of Prilep

were outstanding in this field. Literary attempts were made by Trayko Kitanchev and Evtim Sprostranov who both wrote several poems in Macedonian in the style of folk poetry. In the field of philology the self-taught Gyorgyi Pulevski had, even before the eighties, compiled two dictionaries: the Dictionary of Four Languages and the Dictionary of Three Languages. The underlying purpose of these was, among other things, to demonstrate the independent existence of the Macedonian people.

In the field of the fine arts there was no particularly distinguished production, but notable in this sphere were the first endeavours to liberate art from exclusively religious subjects.

It was in this period that the first Macedonian composers, such as Yordan Badev of Prilep, appeared.

The attention of Macedonian scholars in the scientific field was directed towards the study of their own land. The attempt of Spiro Gulapchev to investigate the ethnographic problems of Macedonia and the endeavours of Gyorché Petrov, the results of whose studies were published in his work "Materials from a Study of Macedonia" are worthy of attention.



## APPEARANCE AND GROWTH OF THE MACEDONIAN NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

### FORMATION OF THE MACEDONIAN REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATION

#### *General Pre-conditions*

The prevailing political conditions of the Macedonian people from the time of the Russo-Turkish War to the end of the nineteenth century imposed certain new objectives: the destruction of the existing social and political system and a struggle for independence and separate statehood. A period began which required a regrouping of the social forces of the Macedonian people to undertake the economic, social and political tasks facing them.

The broad peasant masses were inimically disposed towards feudalism but were culturally, ideologically and politically backward. They formed, however, the motive force of the national movement, while the bourgeois and petit bourgeois elements in the towns, although inadequately developed, were the vanguard of the movement.

In addition to these two social groups there were also the still insufficiently developed urban craft and artisan groups, who did not yet represent an independent political factor; the intelligentsia, especially the teachers who were closely linked to the peasantry; and the share-croppers, day-labourers and servants.

It was from a Macedonian society with this social basis that, at the end of the nineteenth century, the national revolutionary movement, i.e. the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation, was born. With the strengthening of the leadership of the movement in the course of its development the tasks before it became more concrete and it was to expand continually its economic and political programmes.

## *Formation of the Organisation*

The widespread national liberation activity in Macedonia during the nineties of the nineteenth century led to the formation of a secret revolutionary organisation. Macedonian students abroad began to form various societies to which revolutionary ideas were basic.

The difficult socio-political conditions in the country made their contribution to the spontaneous creation of groups whose underlying purpose was self-defence from various evil-doers.

The growth of the initiative for self-defence, spontaneously stimulated by the necessity of self-preservation, was of especial significance in convincing the Macedonian peasants that they themselves were the one and only efficient protection of their own lives and possessions. The best proof of this was the results achieved by the short-lived activity of the faris. This pointed them in the direction of the development of self-defence and of uniting individuals and groups for more efficient protection from all who might attack the peasants' lives and possessions.

In nearly all parts of Macedonia there existed in the last decade of the nineteenth century groups of peasants organised for their own defence. In the immediate surroundings of Bitola alone there were several such groups.

The existence of such groups and circles and the varying conceptions of the form and aim that should be given to the future revolutionary organisation stimulated the foundation of an organisation which would assemble and unite the scattered forces and subordinate them to a defined aim – the liberation of Macedonia. It remained only to take the final step, the unification of the Macedonian people's national strength in a single, overall revolutionary organisation.

That step was taken in the Autumn of 1893. On 23rd October, 1893 (old style), in the house of the Salonika bookseller Ivan Hadzhi Nikolov, there assembled Damé Gruev, a high-school teacher born in Smilevo, Hristo Tatarchev, a doctor born in Resen, Ivan Hadzhi Nikolov, a Salonika bookseller born in Kukush (Kilkis), Petar Pop Arsov, born in the village of Bogomila near Veles, Anton Dimitrov, a primary teacher born in the village of Ayvatovo near Salonika, and Hristo Batandzhiev, a high-school teacher born in the village of Gumendzhé near Enidzhé Vardar.

The meeting's fundamental concerns were the future of political activity in Macedonia and the necessity of organised public action. After lengthy discussion the group was constituted as a society and it was agreed that all present would undertake to work for its expansion among their acquaintances. Advantage was taken of the fact that Salonika was a central place in Macedonia where

teachers, craftsmen, merchants and clergymen gathered and in a short while a large number of people were drawn into the new society. Even more important was the acknowledgement that in Macedonia there existed conditions favourable to the development of intensified revolutionary activity. Encouraged by this the organisers met for a second time in Salonika at the beginning of 1894. On the agenda were the experience gained so far and the future of the work they had begun.

After extensive discussion in which each individual's views were expressed, according to the testimony of Ivan Hadzhi Nikolov, the following aims were put to the new organisation: that it be both secret and revolutionary; that its territory consist of the land within the geographical and ethnographic boundaries of Macedonia – for which reason it was to be called 'Internal'; and that any persons born and living in Macedonia could be enrolled in it as members regardless of faith or nationality. The Macedonian organisers' political aims were: the autonomy of Macedonia and the safeguarding of the organisation's independence, lest it fall under the influence of the policies of governments of neighbouring liberated states.

It was decided at the meeting that one of those present, Petar Pop Arsov, should draft a constitution. Later, when the Constitution had been accepted, the constituting of the new organisation took place. Hristo Tatarchev was elected President and Damé Gruev Secretary and Treasurer.

The resolution of these matters made possible the Organisation's rapid and systematic expansion. During this period of attracting new members attention was concentrated upon the intelligentsia and the economically stronger urban milieu. The resultant formula was quite straightforward: everyone who was against the Exarchate's centralising policy was considered acceptable as someone who was prepared to devote himself to the revolutionary idea.

The expansion of the Organisation beyond the Salonika region and into the Macedonian interior – Prilep, Bitola, Ohrid, Struga and Kavadarci – demonstrated that the interest in its work was great and that there was a need to extend the categories of people from among whose numbers its members were being recruited. At the counselling session, held for this purpose in Resen on 15th August 1894, it was decided, in view of the importance of teachers and schools in Macedonian life and, consequently, for the spreading of the revolutionary work, that the Organisation should have as one of its aims the placing of teachers sympathetic to it in all schools, District and Exarchate. It was also decided to take the Boards of Management of the District Schools into the hands of the Organisation.

On the completion of the first year of its existence the Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation had assumed the fundamental characteristics of its organisational, ideological and political form. In their essence these characteristics reflected the restricted views of the Organisation's founders and also the influence of Bulgarian revolutionary literature from the seventies of the nineteenth century.

The founders of the Revolutionary Organisation and the Macedonian intelligentsia in general, either because of propaganda activity or through furthering their own education in the capitals of the neighbouring states, were not merely acquainted with the revolutionary traditions of those people but came under their influence. The same was true of those Macedonians who studied in the West, especially in Switzerland, where the influence of Russian nationals and anarchists was strong. The ideas of the French Revolution, of Mazzini and of Garibaldi had also been absorbed. Nor were the ideas of socialism unfamiliar to the youth of Macedonia. Reaching the under-developed areas, that the Balkans then were, socialist ideas were not long in finding a place among Macedonian emigrants and the Macedonian intelligentsia.

Although contemporary political and revolutionary ideas influenced the leaders of the national movement of the Macedonian people in the period from the formation of the Revolutionary Organisation, they were unable to take root in Macedonia itself. The conditions necessary for this process did not exist in the social and political environment. They were rather an accompanying factor, a result of individual education and personal commitment. The best confirmation of this is to be found in the name initially given to the Organisation: the Bulgarian-Macedonian-Adrianople Revolutionary Committees. The name was however of no significance so far as the aim of the Organisation was concerned: the implementation of complete political autonomy for Macedonia and for the district of Adrianople (Article Two of the Constitution). The Organisation's aim arose out of the needs of the Macedonian people and out of a realistic assessment of the objective conditions.

The influence of foreign revolutionary experience was felt most strongly in the organisational structure of the movement, relatively undeveloped though this was as yet. The conditions for admittance into the organisation, which were written into its Constitution, were a particular reflection of this experience. According to the first Constitution only members of the Slav population which came under Exarchate authority could be received into the Organisation. This nationalistic attitude restricted the basis of the revolutionary movement and closed the doors on co-operation with the other subjugated and exploited nationalities in Macedonia.

However, confronted with the characteristically offensive attitude of the Exarchate policy and administration in Macedonia, and springing up to a large extent as its antithesis, the Organisation decreed from its very inception an uncompromising struggle to displace the Exarchate administration from key positions in the autonomous, self-governing institutions of the Macedonian people.

#### *Formation of the Macedonian Committee in Sofia and Armed Actions of 1895 in Eastern Macedonia*

The appearance of the Macedonian Internal Organisation and its ever more expressly anti-Exarchate policy and the consolidation of propaganda from other sources, Serbian in particular, influenced Bulgarian state policy towards the Ottoman Empire in the direction of more extreme and aggressive steps.

From the Autumn of 1894 the Bulgarian government began to employ a combination of methods which brought pressure to bear upon the Ottoman Empire in order to gain as great a number of privileges as possible in Macedonia: in the first place decrees for the appointment of bishops to the Eparchies of Debar, Kukush (Kilkis), Strumitsa, Melnik and Bitola. Public meetings demanding the implementation of Article Twenty-three of the Berlin Treaty were organised in all the major towns of Bulgaria. It was at this time that the Macedonian Societies in Bulgaria were united and the 'Macedonian Committee' formed at the Congress of March 1895. The aim of this committee was to fight for political autonomy for Macedonia and the Adrianople district, aided by the Bulgarian constitutional and political apparatus and institutions.

At the same time as the formation of the 'Macedonian Committee' there began, under the protection of the Bulgarian authorities, in the Winter of 1895, the recruitment for bands whose training was entrusted to an officer of the Bulgarian Army, Boris Sarafov. On completion of their training most of these bands were sent into Macedonia.

With the coming of Spring in 1895 all the old outlaw leaders were mobilised. From the members of the recruited bands four large detachments and a number of small units of six hundred men in all were formed. Towards the end of June they were sent into Macedonia with a predetermined aim: to provoke uprisings. However apart from Boris Sarafov's band, which on 12th July took the town of Melnik by assault and held it for several hours, they were all disbanded at the very frontier. Thus ended the action of the Bulga-

rian court and government in 1895, tendentiously called the Melnik Uprising.

Regardless of the dimensions of this staged action on the part of the bands in 1895, the consequences for Eastern Macedonia and the Macedonian people were far-reaching. It marked the start of armed intervention in Macedonia by the Balkan states.

For Bulgaria the results of this action were more than merely good. On the international plan it had become clear that, in any posing and consideration of the Macedonian Question, Bulgaria was a factor which had to be taken into account. Furthermore this action helped Ferdinand in that he gained recognition from Russia as the Prince of Bulgaria.

For the Macedonian people and the revolutionary movement this action proved a bitter experience with harsh results in the areas to which the bands had been sent. The Revolutionary Organisation, confronted from the outset by a foreign, external factor which was an obstacle to its ultimately irresistible growth, adopted a hostile attitude towards the activity of the 'Macedonian Committee'. In the course of August 1895 the Central Committee of the Organisation sent a letter to the 'Macedonian Committee' categorically demanding: that in future the Macedonian Committee in Sofia should send no bands of any sort, nor yet armed individuals into Macedonia and the district of Adrianople for they brought only ill and hampered the peaceable organising of the people and strengthening of the Organisation. The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation gave warning that it would be merciless towards all those who did not respect its orders and regulations.

At the very outset of the Bulgarian court and bourgeoisie's interventionist action in Macedonia the Internal Organisation took up a determined stance, not allowing any interference from outside in its internal affairs and warning that it would be merciless towards all those who did not act in accordance with this request.

The action had one positive effect of the Organisation in that it contributed to a swift understanding that any expectation of selfless help from the Bulgarian state was illusory. From then onwards the idea of the independence and sovereignty of the Internal Revolutionary Organisation was raised to the level of a fundamental principle. Moreover that idea was to become a basic ideological and political weapon of the Organisation, deeply imbedded in both individual and collective consciousness, which was to find expression in the decisions of the Salonika Congress of 1896.

### *Appearance of the Socialist and Workers' Movement in Macedonia Vasil Glavinov's Activity*

The level of development of the class movement in Macedonia was determined by the under-developed socio-economic relations within the Ottoman Empire. At the end of the nineteenth century the Macedonian working class was only a potential force and not a factor which could play a significant rôle. This affected the penetration and expansion of socialist ideas in the country. Since neither material nor political conditions existed within Macedonia the first socialist associations came into existence beyond its frontiers among the Macedonian economic emigrants and the intelligentsia abroad – in Bulgaria, Russia and Switzerland.

The penetration of socialist ideas among Macedonian emigrants dates from the mid-eighties of the nineteenth century. However, a more organised and more systematic expansion of socialist teachings and literature among Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria and into Macedonia itself took place after 1890 when the basic cell of the Macedonian socialist group was formed in Sofia.

The central character in the formation and development of the group was Vasil Glavinov. Born in Veles, c. 1869, he had learned the woodcarver's craft. While still a young man he went as an economic emigrant to Sofia in 1887. Finding himself in a more developed environment with relatively organised working class activity Glavinov accepted the ideas of socialism and entered the ranks of the workers' movement.

Seeing in socialist ideas the future of his people and their road to political and social liberation, from the very outset of his activity as a propagator of socialist ideas, Glavinov directed his attention towards Macedonian emigrant workers and other circles first in Sofia and then in Macedonia itself. Finding the soil amenable to the spread of socialist teaching Glavinov graduated from purely educational activity to practical, organisational work. In the course of 1893 he moved towards the foundation of a separate Macedonian workers' social-democratic group independent of the Bulgarian Workers' Social-Democratic Party, under whose aegis his activity had developed.

This event, the founding of a separate Macedonian workers' social-democratic group, was of the greatest importance in the development of the socialist and workers' movement in Macedonia. It bears witness to the fact that even in the initial stages of his work spreading socialist ideas among Macedonian workers, although outside Macedonia Glavinov had grasped the characteristic features which differentiated the interests of the Macedonian workers from those of the Bulgarians, and the tasks which stood before

them. However, this attempt to create an independent Macedonian Socialist Movement encountered opposition among certain circles of the Bulgarian Social-Democratic Party who regarded it as separatist. Fearing isolation, Glavinov refrained from constituting his group formally but kept the basic cell, which included Velé Markov, Dimitar Mirashchiev, Stoyan Stoyanov, Andon Shulev and Atanas Razdolv, around him.

Glavinov went on to extend his socialist educational activity from Sofia into Macedonia. In 1894 he set up a reading-room in Veles – in effect the first workers' educational association in Macedonia – with sixty-five enrolled members. This marked the initiation of the spread of socialist ideas in the country. This and similar societies which appeared later in other Macedonian towns were to become centres for the grouping together of workers. It was under their influence that the first strikes in Macedonia began in the year 1900.

A further step on the road towards the formation of Glavinov's group as an independent Macedonian socialist organisation was taken in the course of 1895.

From the start of its activity Glavinov's group adopted a positive attitude towards the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement. Furthermore, one of its principal preoccupations was the liberation of Macedonia. It maintained close links with many distinguished members of the Revolutionary Organisation and particularly with Gotsé Delchev.

Insufficiently informed of the Bulgarian court's intentions in sending armed bands into Macedonia, the group did not fully grasp the nature of these actions. Thinking them the first steps of revolution in Macedonia, the group offered its services. It hastened the publication of its newspaper, *Револуција* (Revolution), an earlier project, which was the organ of the "Macedonian Revolutionaries". The newspaper was used on the one hand for the dissemination of socialist ideas and on the other for the formulating of the group's programme for the liberation of Macedonia. Synthesising this in the slogan "The liberation of Macedonia is the work of the Macedonians themselves", the group formulated the aim of the struggle as "the creation of an independent Macedonian republic".

Gradually freeing itself from misconceptions of the character of the bands' action, the group developed its views of the roads leading to the liberation of the Macedonian people. It devoted itself ever more determinedly to lasting and systematic revolutionary activity. Its motto was to struggle against chauvinism of any kind on the part of the neighbouring bourgeois states which looked upon Macedonia simply as rich booty. It saw the mobilisation of the forces of the subjugated peoples within the Ottoman Empire as a condition for the successful destruction of the Ottoman socio-political

system. However, the group did not neglect its class aims. It set itself the task of fighting for an expansion of the revolutionary movement's ideological basis in current socialist revolutionary-thought.

Aware that any revolution, any struggle for freedom can only secure lasting independence if this is the result of its own strength, Glavinov's group invested all its energies in spreading the knowledge that the Macedonian people could not and should not expect their liberation from any other source than themselves. Committing itself to a complete mobilisation of the Macedonian people to carry out the revolutionary tasks, the group particularly insisted that Macedonian workers and economic emigrants, who were exposed to the harshest forms of exploitation and would consequently be the most energetic and soundest element in the revolutionary struggle, should be drawn into the movement. Once they had recovered from their temporary illusions, the Macedonian socialists declared themselves for the independence of the Macedonian national revolutionary movement and for its being broad and democratic. This tenet was elevated to the level of a factor of major importance in the national revolutionary struggle of the Macedonian people.

#### *Gotsé Delchev's Entry into the Revolutionary Organisation*

The celebration of the second anniversary of the Revolutionary Organisation was marked by a major event: Gotsé Delchev entered its ranks.

Gotsé Delchev was born on 23rd January 1872 in Kukush (Kilkis). After completing pro-gymnasium in his native town, he continued his education at the Exarchate Gymnasium in Salonika. Restless and high-spirited, with a sharp and discerning mind, Delchev soon found himself in the midst of the students' secret circles among which revolutionary ideas were being spread.

On completing the sixth form he enrolled at the military academy in Sofia. Not even there, however, although subjected to the strict rules of the academy, did he sever his links with his fatherland. Living with its problems, he soon oriented himself towards the situation prevailing among Macedonian emigrants in Sofia and their aspirations. He came into contact with Vasil Glavinov, founder of the Macedonian socialist group. The ideas of socialism in general and even more the group's view of the paths leading to the liberation of Macedonia became close to him. They supplied the answers to his questions about the Macedonian people's future. He embraced these ideas although they were in complete contra-

diction to those in which he had been educated at the military academy. On 24th September 1894 he was expelled from the academy on the grounds that he was a socialist.

Immediately upon his expulsion from the academy Delchev left Sofia. Returning to Macedonia he settled in Shtip as a teacher. Grippled by ideas for the liberation of Macedonia, he at once joined the Organisation.

Before Gotsé Delchev's arrival in Shtip and his joining of the Organisation the latter's activities had been limited mainly to the urban and craft elements. The logic and requirements of revolution, on the contrary, demanded a wider movement that would include all the nationalities. Delchev soon saw that this was indispensable. Devoting himself with enthusiasm to the revolutionary work he abandoned the practice hitherto employed in attracting people into the Organisation. He addressed himself courageously, openly and confidently to the people – irrespective of whether they were from the town or the countryside. Making use of every available occasion to spread revolutionary propaganda, he was constantly to be found among the people, among the rural masses who thirsted after freedom and education. He taught them about the need for the organisation of the people and pointed to examples from the struggles of the neighbouring peoples and to the lives of great revolutionaries like Garibaldi. Results came quickly: whole villages joined the movement and enrolment was on a massive scale. Churchyards proved the best place for this. The Organisation grew rapidly. New revolutionary centres sprang up whose axes were directed towards Shtip, which had become an outstanding centre of revolutionary propaganda and practice. There, by coincidence, two of the most important personalities in the revolutionary movement met – Dame Gruev and Gotsé Delchev, the former systematic, patient and logical and the latter extravert, fiery, single-hearted and sociable, burning with the revolutionary flame. Their encounter in Shtip was of great significance for the further development of the Organisation. In a word Shtip became a testing ground for revolutionary education. There new methods were introduced into the work of organising which were later accepted by the whole of the Organisation.

#### *The Salonika Congress of 1896*

The experience gained in two years of activity indicated that the further successful growth of the revolutionary movement and the protection of its independence lay in attracting into it the broad masses of the people. To achieve this it was necessary that the

movement should be cleansed of all the narrow-minded nationalism of its founders.

In the Summer of 1896 a Congress of the Organisation was summoned to solve these problems. The Congress, which was attended by some fifteen or sixteen delegates, analysed the work of the Organisation to date and, on the basis of the experience it had gained, determined precisely the principles underlying its programme.

One of the vital fundamental principles was that the Organisation was fighting not merely in the interests of the Macedonian people but for all the oppressed in Macedonia, regardless of faith or nationality, and that it should be promoted and supported by them.

The proclamation of the fact that the Organisation was internal and Macedonian at a time when in Sofia there had been set up the pro-Bulgarian "Macedonian Committee", which claimed to be the one and only leader of the liberation cause in Macedonia, in fact raised the Organisation to a level of complete independence, more particularly within the boundaries of the Macedonian interior. This was stressed in the new name that was given to the Organisation: The Secret Macedonian and Adrianople Revolutionary Organisation.

Raising aloft the principle of sovereignty and competency in all matters relating to Macedonia, the Congress defined the means whereby the achievement of its fundamental aim – full political autonomy for Macedonia and the district of Adrianople – was to be achieved, namely "by uniting in the villages of Macedonia and the district of Adrianople all the dissatisfied elements, regardless of nationality, for the implementation of autonomy through revolution" (Article 1 of the Constitution).

Two years of revolutionary practice, the chauvinist propaganda of the neighbouring Balkan states and the Bulgarian court's armed action of 1895 all clearly indicated that the path to the liberation of the Macedonian people led through a revolution which would effect a change not only in the socio-political system of the country but also in the consciousness of the Macedonian people. Henceforth it was to become a means of opposing both bondage and tyranny and also "the chauvinistic propaganda and nationalist bickerings which enervate the Macedonian people in their struggle against the overall enemy" (Article 2 of the Constitution).

Proclaiming the principles of sovereignty and autonomy as immediate aims in the struggle, the Organisation in effect determined its relationship to the various domestic and also the external and alien factors involved: the church and school authorities, different varieties of national propaganda, the Ottoman committees and the neighbouring Balkan states. Indeed it established the task



of pursuing such an independent policy as would facilitate laying the foundations of the future Macedonian state organisation in the interests of the struggle to attain extensive political rights.

The Salonika Congress divided the territory into six revolutionary areas, each composed of several sub-districts, Salonika, Bitola, Skopje, Shtip, Strumitsa, Serres and, outside Macedonia, Adrianople. Salonika was chosen as the seat of the Central Committee. Shtip was later discontinued as the centre of a revolutionary district.

The Congress was a turning point in the growth of the national revolutionary movement. It revealed new perspectives in the struggle. The opening of the Organisation's doors not merely made it into a mass organisation but also extended its ideological basis. Ideological tolerance gave entry to the beneficent currents of socialist ideas and welcomed the Macedonian socialists, both as a group and as individuals, into the movement.

#### *Formation of the Organisation's Armed Forces*

The Revolutionary Organisation's rapid expansion after the Salonika Congress brought to the surface numerous problems which demanded a swift and efficacious solution. The future growth of the Organisation depended upon how and to what extent it could solve these problems.

One of the key questions requiring swift settlement and upon which the growth of the Organisation would depend was that of arms. Arms possessed a magical power for the revolutionary peasant masses. They created a sense of security in the eyes of people who had been deprived of their rights. This was in fact a question of the Organisation's authority, a major factor in the achievement of the aims mentioned above. It therefore absorbed all the attention of the Organisation.

At first the leadership of the Organisation had hoped that it would be easy to obtain arms from the neighbouring states, especially from Bulgaria. However, it became obvious that arms would not be supplied without definite concessions in respect of the Organisation's independence. It became clear that only those things which the Organisation achieved itself were certain, and for this reason a policy of self-armament of the districts and sub-districts was adopted. All available funds from all possible channels were devoted to the acquisition of weapons. This was particularly successfully organised in Greece, Albania (Elbasan) and in the country itself.

But, despite all its efforts, the Organisation was not able to meet the need for arms, particularly up-to-date arms, satisfactorily.

As well as arming the population the question of building up the movement's armed forces occupied the Organisation's attention. The Salonika Congress had paid particular attention to this question and it was written into the Constitution of the Organisation that each region of the revolutionary sub-districts should have its own band whose duty was laid down in special regulations.

The office of building up the armed forces was entrusted to Gotsé Delchev. As he possessed the necessary military education, he was the best qualified for this task. Devoting himself entirely to the revolution, he was at all times conversant with its work.

With the formation of the bands, its armed forces, the Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation took on a new aspect. The bands became the lynch-pin of the movement and it changed character under their influence. Large-scale enrolment of the rural population in the ranks of the Organisation took place. The bands provided the military and revolutionary personnel for the movement. And thus their emergence was a factor of major importance in the Organisation's growth and development. The idea of liberation now assumed a concrete form and became visible. The most dangerous pillagers now disappeared before the very eyes of the subjugated Macedonian peasantry, whose moral dependence upon the official authorities and links with Ottoman state were consequently weakened. The bands became judicial organisations, arbitrating not merely in village matters but also in disputes with the Ottoman authorities. The incidence of criminality decreased. The bands urged the population to resist the illegal demands of the beys, made an end to forced labour and fought the abuses involved in the collection of tithes. All this gave the bands a power which was irresistibly attractive to the Macedonian people.

#### *Spreading of Revolutionary Propaganda by the Organisation*

The Organisation was confronted by the need to develop its own propaganda activity as well its organisational, political and military activities connected with the expansion of the revolutionary movement and the confirmation and nurture of a revolutionary consciousness among the masses. As the moment developed, so did the awareness of the need to develop its own means of propaganda and accessible and direct channels of information which would explain and further the movement's ideas and aims.

Following upon the formation of the Revolutionary Organisation, the first duplicated news-sheets appeared – such as *Ha op-*

ъжие (To Arms), Въстаник (Rebel), Освобождение (Liberation) and Свобода или смърт (Freedom or death) – which were issued by individual revolutionary districts.

Working under conditions of illegality, with poor technical equipment and inadequate experience, limited the possibilities of meetings the need for printed propaganda. A way out was sought in issuing revolutionary publications outside Macedonia which were then introduced into the country. In this way the news-sheets Въстаник (Rebel), Дело (Work) and, later L'Effort in Geneva and Le Mouvement Macedonien in Paris appeared.

Apart from satisfying internal needs the news-sheets, especially Дело (Work), aimed to reveal to a world public the aspirations of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie towards the conquest of Macedonia, to discredit the rôle of the Supreme Committee as being an exponent of the Bulgarian court; in a word, they aid at securing the autonomy and integrity of Macedonia. The intention of L'Effort and Le Mouvement Macedonien was to inform world public opinion of events in Macedonia, the situation of the Macedonian people and their fight for freedom.

On the whole, however, in the pre-Ilinden period the Organisation's propaganda activity and especially its printed material remained insufficiently developed.

#### *Strengthening the Organisation's Revolutionary Authority*

Establishing its fundamental aim as "the implementation through revolution of full political autonomy for Macedonia", the Revolutionary Organisation took on the task of destroying the extant economic and political systems in Macedonia and constructing a new system which would emerge from the revolutionary activity of the subjugated people and be based upon their interests.

To attain its aim of destroying the centuries-long bondage and setting in its place constitutional and legal unity, as a stage in the total constitutional establishment of the Macedonian people, the Revolutionary Organisation, as well as attracting the broad masses of the people into its ranks, confirmed the foundations of the new revolutionary authority. This was of great consequence for the movement as it led to the people's turning away from the existing institutions of the subjugator; to the growth of their consciousness and habits of independence and self-government; and to the raising of their political and cultural level. The logic of revolution also demanded this strengthening of the revolutionary authority. A large-scale and all-nationality Organisation could not be expected to develop if the movement's goals of independence,

freedom and statehood, which sprang from the people's deepest aspirations, were not defined.

The first organs of the revolutionary authority were dictated by the need for self-protection in the revolutionary work. Their appearance was consequently noted as early as the first years of the creation of the Revolutionary Organisation. These were the investigatory and disciplinary police organs of the revolution whose task was to paralyse hostile activity and, by so doing, safeguard the unchecked development of the movement.

As well as forming these repressive organs of revolutionary authority the Revolutionary Organisation created other organs according to its needs. These were a courier service, a secret postal service and, in time, a judiciary.

The emergence and growth of the revolutionary movement's judiciary, as a means of settling more than merely everyday disputes such as questions of property, divorce, etc., was of primary significance in developing self-reliance and self-organisation among the Macedonian people. This factor was put to good use by the leaders of the Organisation. They continually attempted to advance the judicial institutions of the movement. They discouraged the peasants from resorting to Ottoman courts where they would be exposed to financial exploitation and encouraged them to set up village courts and discuss each matter themselves. It was, in fact, a case of affording the peasants an opportunity to become aware of and to appreciate their own authority.

Continuing these endeavours, and acting justly, the Organisation's judicial work spread over the whole country. The courts dealt not only with disputes between Macedonians but also those arising between Macedonians and members of other nationalities, not infrequently with Turks. The peasants' avoidance of the Ottoman courts came to the notice of the Ottoman authorities themselves.

The Revolutionary Organisation's influence was felt in other areas of public life too, particularly in economic relations. It became a factor which regulated relations between chiflik-owners and chiflik-workers, that is between employers and employees. It exerted pressure for the abolition of the chiflik estates and also organised the collection of tithes. When necessary it issued instructions that the population should boycott the elections of muhtars – village or quarter headmen – and agas in villages and towns, thus affecting both the state administration and finances.

Establishing the revolutionary authority in the course of revolutionising the broad masses of the people, the Revolutionary Organisation at the same time entered into both the public and private lives of the Macedonian peasantry, bringing them out from their extremely backward state. Through practical, concrete ac-

tions and clear examples it taught the peasantry to become self-governing. Thus it operated within the Ottoman state as a distinct and independent constitutional organisation in Macedonia.

## REVOLUTIONARY CURRENTS OUTSIDE THE ORGANISATION

### *Macedonian Socialists (Revolutionaries) and National Revolutionary Movement*

With the strengthening of the Macedonian national revolutionary movement as expressed in the Revolutionary Organisation, other revolutionary groups and currents also appeared.

The Macedonian socialist movement, founded by Vasil Glavinov, was one of these.

After 1895 the basic activities of this group were along two lines: the propagation of socialist ideas in Macedonia itself and among Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria and the preparation of the conditions for entry into the revolutionary movement.

As far as the propagation of socialist ideas was concerned the group oriented its energies, in accordance with prevailing conditions, towards the printed word. The newspaper Политическа свобода (Political Freedom) appeared in 1898 in place of Революција (Revolution). At the same time the publication began of a series of small, popular booklets under the title of Македонска работническа библиотека (Macedonian Workers' Library). These presented socialist ideas in a readily accessible form to the Macedonian working man, who was made aware that his political and economic liberation lay in the conscious struggle for well understood interests.

On various occasions, and particularly at the First of May celebrations in 1896 and 1897, the group appeared in Sofia as an independent Macedonian socialist group – although it had been formally constituted – with the slogans, "The liberation of Macedonia is the work of the Macedonians" and "Macedonia for the Macedonians".

As a result of intensive propagation of socialist ideas the first socialist circles were formed in Macedonia, in Veles, Skopje, Krushevo and Bitola. In the same period the first efforts in the economic struggle took place – the strike of the railway-men on the Veles-Demir Kapiya line.

At the very outset of their activity as a constituted group, the Macedonian socialists defined their positive attitude towards the

Macedonian national revolutionary movement. This attitude was based on the recognition that without Macedonia's liberation from the existing socio-political system of the Ottoman Empire, and without the advancement of the struggle for socialist relations, further development of the social processes in Macedonia was impossible. For this reason the Macedonian socialists linked their propagation of socialist ideas in Macedonia to the goal of liberation from Ottoman bondage.

On this basis, the activity of the Macedonian socialists with regard to the national revolutionary movement was directed towards two main points: the protection of the Macedonian people's struggle from chauvinistic foreign encroachment and agitation for the democratisation of the Revolutionary Organisation.

The Macedonian socialists adopted an uncompromising attitude towards the activity of chauvinistic propaganda and its destructive effects.

So far as the revolutionary movement was concerned, they adopted the viewpoint that liberation could be achieved with the given domestic forces and devoted themselves to the creation of a broad platform on the basis of which they could mobilise all the subjugated and exploited masses in Macedonia to bring about an autonomous Macedonian republic on federal and the broadest democratic principles. In practical terms the Macedonian socialists considered that it was possible to guarantee the independence of all the nationalities if the federative republic was organised on the following lines: that a federative republic absolutely independent of the Ottoman Empire be formed from the vilayets of Salonika, Bitola, Skopje and Adrianople; that the government of the federation be the responsibility of an elected council; that all the districts or cantons be represented in the council by an equal number of members, regardless of their population figures or any other consideration; that the cantons forming the federation be free and independent in the administration of their own local affairs; that there be local legislative and executive authorities; and that the president of the federation be elected by direct voting and have a five-year mandate. The socialists' programme for the manner in which a future Macedonian state should be organised was in fact the first precisely formulated constitutional projection by a Macedonian political movement at this period.

While giving decisive, sincere and full support to the Revolutionary Organisation, the socialists were at the same time openly critical of its shortcomings, above all of its rigid centralism and ideologically unreceptive nature. They devoted their energies to creating such an organisational structure as would enable a constant flow of democratic ideas and the development of individual initiative.

Aware that they could only ensure consideration for their views within the revolutionary movement if they themselves joined its ranks, the Macedonian socialists formally requested to be affiliated to the Revolutionary Organisation as a group, i.e. as a political movement, under strictly defined conditions. These conditions were formulated into seven points at the First Socialist Conference in Macedonia, held in Krushevo on 3rd July, 1900. Their essence was as follows: that people should not be persecuted for their beliefs; that after its entry into the Organisation the socialist group should not be prevented from engaging freely in socialist propaganda among the masses; and that the group should be represented in the District and Town Committees of the Organisation. The propositions of the Krushevo Socialist Conference were laid before the District Committee in Bitola which accepted them and entrusted to the socialists certain key positions in the Revolutionary Organisation in the District, among them the position of inspector of the bands and that of leader in the Krushevo sub-district, to which position Nikola Karev was appointed.

The entry of the socialist group into the Revolutionary Organisation ranks was of positive and many-sided significance. It created an opportunity for direct and unhampered propagation of socialist ideas among the revolutionary masses and for raising their consciousness of the need to protect the independence of the revolutionary movement and Macedonia's integrity in the face of all external encroachments.

The immediate results of the Macedonian socialists' entry into the ranks of the Revolutionary Organisation were reflected in the outcome of the Ilinden Uprising with the establishment of the Krushevo Republic which was a practical realisation of their conception of constitution for a government of Macedonia.

#### *Macedonian Secret Revolutionary Committee*

In the last few years of the nineteenth century and immediately before the Ilinden Uprising ideological and political currents appeared which, while remaining outside the revolutionary movement, nevertheless enriched the Macedonian national movement.

One such current was the Macedonian Secret Revolutionary Committee (MTPK: MSRC). Its inception dates from the beginning of 1898. Its founders were Macedonian students in Switzerland who were influenced by anarchist ideas.

In line with its programme the MSRC dedicated itself to complete independence and maximum freedom for the Macedonian people, to the struggle against the rousing of national antago-

nisms in Macedonia and to the unification of all the nationalities in the fight to overthrow Ottoman rule. The Committee reacted particularly sharply to chauvinist propaganda. All bearers of such propaganda, whether they came from Bulgaria, Greece or Serbia, were considered as extremely dangerous enemies of the people.

The Committee hoped to achieve its aims through revolution to be raised by the Macedonian people themselves. It took practical steps in that direction in Macedonia itself, and in 1899 entered into discussions with the Albanian Committee in Bucharest about combining the forces of the two subjugated peoples against foreign bondage. The aim was to raise rebellion simultaneously in Albania and in Macedonia. It was felt that freedom could be more easily achieved in this way.

The MSRC was composed of honourable but impatient young revolutionaries who had no aptitude for extended organisational activity and were individualists, eager for quick results. It did not remain in existence for long, and was a secondary manifestation of the revolutionary movement. It existed under specific congenial domestic and international conditions and when these disappeared it did so too. This does not mean, however, that it left no traces on the Macedonian revolutionary movement. It provided the ideological groundwork for the appearance of the gemici ('sailors') and all that they represent in Macedonian history.

#### *Other Currents in the Macedonian National Movement*

Although on its formation the Revolutionary Organisation occupied a central place in Macedonian political life it was not in a position to absorb all the existing ideological currents. This meant that there were other currents whose views on the liberation of Macedonia differed from those of the Organisation and from all others in which revolution was the fundamental method.

The Татковина (Fatherland) Society, founded in 1894, deserves attention in this connection. Its aims were to study the situation in Macedonia and to reduce the influence of the Bulgarian Exarchate there. The Society's activity did not last long as it was proscribed by the Bulgarian authorities.

In 1893/94 Macedonian students at the teachers' training school in Belgrade founded the Vardar Teachers' Society. Its purpose was to counter the aims of Serbian propaganda, for which reason it was disbanded by the authorities. In the spring of 1902 Macedonian students in Belgrade attempted to form a club of their own but this move was also banned. They nevertheless succeeded

in starting the publication of a weekly news-sheet called Балкански гласник (Balkan Herald).

Difficult though it was in an atmosphere poisoned by chauvinism for the group to express clearly and precisely its standpoint on the Macedonian people's liberation struggle, the publishers of Балкански гласник (Balkan Herald) mustered sufficient courage to express their basic points of view in the first number. Above all they were concerned to publish against the harmful activity of propaganda which split up a people united in tradition, language and faith into different and opposing factions. Establishing as their aim the mental, moral, national and political education of their fellow-countrymen, the group centred on Балкански гласник (Balkan Herald) dedicated itself to the granting of autonomy to a Macedonia in which the local Slavonic language would be used.

With a platform of this sort the news-sheet was not able to survive for long in Belgrade. It was banned and its more active workers banished from Serbia.

In the winter of 1902 Macedonian students in St. Petersburg in Russia, strengthened by those driven out of Belgrade, formed a 'Slavonic Macedonian Scientific and Literary Society'. In St. Petersburg, far from Macedonia and the Balkans, the group was able to concern itself freely with Macedonia's problems. The students' views on the individuality of the Macedonian people and their liberation were fully expressed. In a memorandum sent to the Russian government on 12th November 1902 the group stood out sharply against the chauvinist propaganda which was suffocating their people's independent development.

The group devised a programme based on the concrete political conditions in the Balkans. Among its fundamental tenets were the following: recognition by the Ottoman Empire of the Macedonian Slavs as a distinct people with a distinct literary language which should become an official language, on a level with Turkish, in the three Macedonian vilayets; recognition of an independent Macedonian church; the appointment of a governor-general with assistants belonging to the national majorities in the three vilayets; and local, elected popular councils.

After the founding of the Revolutionary Organisation the appearance of various ideological movements and groups within the Macedonian national movement contributed to a more precise formulation of the aims of the revolutionary struggle. This enriched the essence of the national process.

## POLICIES OF THE BALKAN STATES TOWARDS MACEDONIA AND THE TMPO (SMRO)

### *Attempts at a Division of Spheres of Influence in Macedonia*

The results achieved in the last decade of the nineteenth century by the propaganda of the three Balkan states of Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia on the one hand and the successes gained in the growth of the national revolutionary movement led to a further attempt by the interested Balkan bourgeois states to reach agreement at the expense of Macedonia by splitting it into spheres of influence.

The first approaches towards such an agreement were made by Serbia and by Greece in the last decade of the nineteenth century. The unequal footing of these two rival states in Macedonia, however, prevented agreement. After the discussions the Serbian government, whose footing in Macedonia was weaker, increased its propaganda, extending it to the whole of the country.

The penetration of Macedonia by Bulgarian bands in 1895 afforded the Bulgarian government certain international advantages vis-a-vis Macedonia. Bulgaria therefore took the initiative in proposing talks on Macedonia with its rivals. Creating the impression that Bulgaria was now ready to undertake frank discussions with Serbia, the Bulgarian initiative was put forward by Prince Ferdinand himself. He proposed the thesis that Macedonia was the chief hindrance to the sincere agreement and fraternal co-existence of Bulgaria and Serbia, despite the fact that the large majority of Macedonia's population were neither Bulgars nor Serbs but Slavs whose language was distinct from both Bulgarian and Serbian. This made it possible for contact to be established between the two governments. Preliminary discussions were held during the visit of King Alexander of Serbia to Sofia in 1897, and an agreement on four issues was signed. According to the terms the two governments undertook: that they would discuss with the Ottoman Empire all points which were of common interest to both; that neither would take unilateral action which would alter the status quo without first obtaining the other's consent; and that, until the Bulgarian and Serbian spheres of interest should be defined by common consent, they would not merely refrain from setting up obstacles in the form of national, church and educational questions, but would indeed help one another.

This agreement did not last long. Aspiring to the whole of Macedonia, the Bulgarian government was not prepared to share it

with anyone and therefore not disposed to enter into lasting and sincere agreements. Furthermore, while conducting discussions with Serbia, Bulgaria was attempting to carry on parallel discussions with Greece and even with the Ottoman Empire. Bulgaria proposed to Greece, who rejected formal discussions, that, until the problem was definitively solved, the three governments should seek the implementation in Macedonia of the reforms promised by the Treaty of Berlin.

Bulgaria expressed interest in discussions with the Ottoman Empire, on condition that the Bulgarian propaganda apparatus in Macedonia be allowed to expand and that Macedonia be made into a privileged province.

The first extended discussions about its future among the Balkan pretenders to Macedonia emphasized yet again the irreconcilable nature of their interests. Bulgaria staked a claim to the whole of Macedonia and sought a settlement which would safeguard her interests. Greece sought the same for herself, only with the tactical move that the question should be settled by a 'disinterested arbiter'. Serbia sought the division of Macedonia into spheres of interest. It was on the basis of these initial positions that discussions concerning Macedonia would proceed from that time onwards among the three rivals.

#### *Organisation and Policies of the Balkan States*

One of the sharpest obstacles to the Organisation was the activity of foreign propaganda. The revolutionary movement was forced to follow an extremely cautious and flexible policy lest it should enter into nationalistic waters. Its policy was reflected in the Constitution of 1896 which opened the doors of the movement to all the subjugated, regardless of faith or nationality. This enabled Vlachs, Macedonians who belonged to the Greek Patriarchate, Uniates and Protestants to enter the ranks of the Organisation.

Adopting a reasonable policy towards the other nationalities in Macedonia, the Organisation was at the same time uncompromising in its attitudes towards agents of propaganda. It reacted most sharply to the attempts, in 1897, of Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece to divide Macedonia into spheres of influence. Taking all possible steps to halt any such agreement, it became even more cautious and independent in its work in order to counteract in advance any combinations that might be made at the expense of Macedonia.

#### *Relations with the Exarchate*

The most serious and most complex of the Organisation's conflicts were those with Bulgarian state policy. These took two main forms: with Exarchate and, later, commercial agents, and with the armed band formations, organised and despatched in the name of the Supreme Committee.

In Salonika, at the heart of Macedonia, conflict between the Exarchate and the Organisation began as soon as the latter was formed. It occurred in connection with the elections in the church and school bodies and districts. Implementing its policy of taking the management of these bodies into its own hands, the Organisation nominated its candidates. In the contest with the Exarchate candidates the Organisation was victorious, and so the conflict began. The Exarchate personnel, mainly Bulgarian educational workers sent from Bulgaria, took up the offensive. They attacked Macedonian teachers, especially those who were members of the Organisation. The conflict was carried from Salonika into the Macedonian interior and was particularly acute in Voden (Edessa) in 1894 and in Prilep in 1897.

Faced with the possibility of losing the presidential positions in the church and school districts, the Exarchate decreed a vigorous investigation of the activities of the organised Macedonian teachers. To this end it issued in 1898 a special circular to its bodies. A large number of Macedonian teachers were dismissed from service, which was tantamount to denouncing them to the Ottoman authorities. Some Exarchate bishops – Grigoriy of Bitola and Gerasim of Strumitsa – and Naumov, the Exarchate representative in Serres, refused to employ any teachers who were members of the revolutionary movement. The Revolutionary Organisation's reaction to this was uncompromising.

Having no other means of opposing the Organisation, the Exarchate representatives in Macedonia formed their own organisation. Thus Благодетелно братство (The Benevolent Brotherhood) came into being. In 1898 it was renamed Революционерно братство (The Revolutionary Brotherhood). The Brotherhood was founded with the knowledge and support of the Bulgarian government. Its brief which was defined by Stoilov, the President of the Bulgarian Government, was to counteract the Organisation. It was thus to become one of the factors in the development of Bulgarian policy in Macedonia. At the heart of the Brotherhood was Professor Ivan Garvanov, a Bulgarian from Stara Zagora. Relying on support from the adherents of the Exarchate in Macedonia, the Brotherhood formed branches in Prilep, Veles, Serres and Kavadarci. Outside Macedonia it was linked with the Supreme Committee in Sofia and joined in the organisation of bands.



Relations between the Organisation and the Brotherhood became tense. They resorted to the use of arms in settling their disagreements. However, on the advice of the Bulgarian government and Exarchate circles, the Brotherhood abandoned its extreme measures and sought ways of coming to terms with the Organisation. In the autumn of 1900 an arrangement was reached whereby the Brotherhood was affiliated to the Organisation with one of its members sitting on the Central Committee and another, Ivan Garvanov, on the local committee in Salonika. Garvanov's entry into the movement proved fatal to the Organisation.

### *Conflict with Bulgarian State Policy*

The conflict between the Revolutionary Organisation and the Exarchate was an indirect conflict with Bulgarian state policy towards Macedonia. This did not mean that there was no direct conflict with the Bulgarian state, for this was forced upon the Organisation despite attempts to avoid it.

From the very formation of the Organisation and the proclamation of its aim to fight for Macedonia's autonomy the Bulgarian government adopted a course of obstruction wherever it could, both in Bulgaria and in Macedonia.

In Macedonia the Bulgarian state waged war on the Organisation through its diplomatic missions, the so-called commercial agencies. On the basis of the Bulgarian government directive of 10th September 1897 they were entrusted with the task of obstructing the revolutionary movement by all means available to them. By agitating among the people against their joining the movement or giving it material support, Bulgarian state policy adopted a course that would lead to Bulgaria taking control of and so paralysing the Organisation.

One of the most powerful means employed towards this end by Bulgarian state policy was the Supreme Committee. After the provocation of the action of the bands in 1895 this Committee took the name of the Supreme Macedonian Committee and General Nikolaev was appointed as its head. Its brief was clear: to become the unique factor for controlling all activities in Macedonia. In practical terms this meant that the Supreme Committee was to subordinate to its purposes all the actions of Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria, while in Macedonia it was to seize control of the Revolutionary Organisation and so subordinate it to the interests of Bulgarian state policy. With regard to foreign countries it was to develop diplomatic activity by sending delegations to the larger and more influential European capitals which would seek a settlement of the Macedonian Question in the interests of Bulgaria.

To achieve its main aim with regard to the Revolutionary Organisation the Supreme Committee was to subject the Organisation to constant pressure. The principal means for realising this policy were the armed bands and the provocation of an uprising in 1902 in the Serres sanjak. Its aims were patently obvious: on the one hand to discredit the Organisation in the eyes of the Macedonian people as being incompetent, and, on the other, to reveal the Organisation to the Ottoman authorities and so deal it an even greater blow.

The Supreme Committee's activities become particularly aggressive in 1900. Concentrating on the Salonika Vilayet, they began with intensive infiltration of bands, especially into the northern districts. For example, in February 1901 six bands of twelve to fifteen persons apiece were infiltrated into Macedonia. These circulated in the regions of Dzhumaya, Petrich, Kukush (Kilkis), Gevgeliya and Veles.

In its infiltration of the Organisation's territory the Supreme Committee first made use of various de-classed elements, renegades from the revolutionary movement and bandits like Doncho Zlatkov from eastern Macedonia. Then, when they had established the necessary conditions for action, bands appeared under the command of active N.C.O's. and officers of the Bulgarian army. This was particularly evident in the course of 1901 and was an indication that larger-scale actions in Macedonia on the part of the Supremacists were being prepared.

The Supremacist took action that was both arrogant and unscrupulous in order to achieve their aim. Exploiting the authority of the Bulgarian state, army and prince, they used propaganda to spread demoralisation, distrust and dissatisfaction with the Revolutionary organisation among the people. Their principal charges were that the Organisation was passive and that it was an obstacle to the speedy liberation of the people. In this connection they did not hesitate to employ even the most extreme methods. They attempted to liquidate outstanding leaders of the Organisation, such as Gotsé Delchev and Yané Sandanski who belonged to the leadership of the Dzhumaya and Petrich districts.

Supremacist activity was particularly intense in the course of 1902. The bands, which by mid-September 1902 numbered eighteen, were concentrated on the right bank of the River Struma (Strymon) in the Gorna Dzhumaya district and in the Maleshevo area.

All the Internal Organisation's endeavours and above all those of Gotsé Delchev, to avoid all serious conflict involving bloodshed, were in vain, particularly after the Bulgarian General Ivan Tsonchev took command of the Supreme Committee. Seeing no other solution and regarding unchecked Supremacist activity

on the territory of the Organisation as inadmissible, Gotsé Delchev took energetic measures to protect the Revolutionary Organisation's independence. On the one hand an attempt was made to halt penetration into Macedonia by further Supremacist bands from Bulgaria and, on the other, an attack was mounted on those bands already in the interior. Armed clashes between the Organisation and Supremacist bands continued throughout 1902. The revolutionary leaders Yané Sandanski, Chernopeev, Krsto Asenov and Slavcho Kovachev won particular distinction in these struggles.

However, the policy of the Internal Organisation was not so much to oppose the Supremacists with arms as to unmask them ideologically as a tool of Greater Bulgarian policy. Supremacist bands which were captured were disarmed, informed of the work of the revolutionary movement and sent back to Bulgaria. Gotsé Delchev and Yané Sandanski invited the Supremacist leaders to take part in public discussions but they declined because their activities were continually being discredited.

In Sofia the news-sheet Дело (Work) was issued to help in unmasking the nature of Supremacism and in defending the independence of the Internal Organisation and of the idea of Macedonia's autonomy. Under the editorship of the Bulgarian poet Yavorov this news-sheet published many details which pointed to the close links between the Supremacists and the Bulgarian government.

Yané Sandanski was particularly successful in unmasking Supremacism as a tool of Bulgarian policy. With inexorable logic he demonstrated that the aim of the Bulgarian officers was to subordinate the Organisation and the Macedonian people's struggle to Bulgarian state interests. Supremacist activity had provided an opportunity to treat the revolutionary movement as an artificial, Bulgarian creation and to degrade its basic purpose: Macedonia for the Macedonians.

The Revolutionary Organisation's attempts to put a halt to a Supremacist activity, and above all to the plan of provoking uprisings, did not achieve the desired results. The Supremacists successfully penetrated the region of Gorna Dzhumaya and there, on 18th September 1902, they organised a Congress at which it was decided to raise Supremacist rebellions on 25th September in the districts of Gorna Dzhumaya, Petrich and Maleshevo.

The Supremacists armed action commenced on 23rd instead of 25th September in a village in the Gorna Dzhumaya district. It was in the second half of October, however, that larger-scale conflicts broke out. The Supremacists' chief aim was to extend the uprising as much as possible so that it would have longer duration and assume a more massive character. Particularly important in their plans was the taking of the Kresnen Gorge whence the road

would be open to the Melnik district, the stronghold of the Revolutionary Organisation. Thus the keenest encounters took place in the immediate vicinity of the Gorge. The Ottoman authorities, however, thwarted the Supremacists' purpose and towards the middle of November completely crushed the uprising.

With their forces of between three hundred and fifty and four hundred band members, the Supremacists had involved twenty-eight villages with a total of about three thousand four hundred eighty homestead in the conflict.

The putting down of this provoked uprising was to have grave after-effects. Fourteen or fifteen villages were either razed or rooted and then burned. About two hundred people fled across the border and thirty-seven were killed.

The consequences for the Organisation were particularly serious. The Ottoman authorities worked consciously for its liquidation and for the disarmament of the population. This was detrimental to the Organisation both psychologically and as propaganda. Although it was obvious to everybody that the base for this action had been in Bulgaria, nevertheless the idea that the Macedonian revolutionary movement was being organised from Sofia began to take hold. This idea was in effect a mortal blow to the ideological and strategic basis of the Organisation.

## THE ILINDEN UPRISING

### *Resolutions of the Salonika Congress of 1903*

One of the Revolutionary Organisation's fundamental aims was to achieve the liberation of the Macedonian people by armed uprising. The Internal Organisation was trying to realise this aim through the long-term process of revolutionising the people themselves, by raising their ideological and political awareness and their readiness for self-sacrifice. Only in conscious commitment to the aims of the revolution did the Organisation see a chance of the large-scale participation of all the peoples concerned. This was a factor which would ensure independence from the encroachment of external enemies and above all of the Supremacists. This strategy stemmed from a recognition of the fact that continual conflict with the forces of the Ottoman state would serve to emphasize both the inhumanity of its reprisals and also the instability of its authority in Macedonia. Thus it was hoped to gain international sympathy

thy for the struggle of the Macedonian people and for their liberation.

The achievement of this aim did not, however, depend upon the desires of the Organisation alone. It did not suit the Supremacists of Sofia in the least that the Macedonian revolutionary movement and, ultimately, a liberated Macedonia should be independent. They therefore did all that they could to sabotage and to render impossible independent development of the movement. Provoked 'uprisings', attempts to discredit the Organisation in the eyes of the people and the physical liquidation of outstanding leaders all had the aim of sowing unrest in the revolutionary ranks and exerting pressure in favour of a premature uprising. The Supremacist actions in the autumn of 1902 in Gorna Dzhumaya were particularly successful in this respect. The rendering leaderless of the Salonika Central Committee contributed to this process. Early in 1901 three members of the Committee, Pere Toshev, Hristo Matov and Hristo Tatarchev, were imprisoned as a result of treachery. Recognising the extent of the arrests of Organisation members, Ivan Hadzhi Nikolov, also a Central Committee Member, expected that he would inevitably be taken and handed over the entire correspondence, list of contacts and codes to the pronounced Supremacist Ivan Garvanov. Finding that he held the reins of the Organisation, the latter abandoned the Internal Organisation's policy and adopted a course which was to lead to a swift and untimely raising of rebellion. Speculating on the likelihood of fresh armed Supremacist provocation, he summoned a congress in January 1903 in Salonika. The Congress was held on 2nd, 3rd and 4th January (old style). It was summoned extraordinarily and irregularly and was attended by only seventeen delegates, most of whom were persons of secondary importance. The central question was whether to raise a rebellion in the spring of 1903. Out of a lengthy discussion there emerged two trains of thought: one in favour of such action and one opposed to it. Garvanov attempted by all possible means to force a resolution in favour of uprising. He exerted strong pressure by untruthful declarations of the supposed preparedness of the Bulgarian regular army to come to the support of the insurgents. In the end, despite opposition, the majority of the delegates accepted Garvanov's proposal. It was decided that a rebellion should be raised in the spring of 1903. The District Committees were entrusted with the task of considering this decision and carrying out the necessary preparations, as well as that of holding congresses.

The resolution of the Salonika Congress gave rise to fierce discussion throughout the Organisation. It was particularly sharply opposed by Gotsé Delchev, Gyorché Petrov and others in Sofia and by the leadership of the Serres Revolutionary District, headed

by Yané Sandanski. In Sofia stormy arguments took place among Revolutionary Organisation supporters. These arguments also produced two lines of thought, for and against. Gotsé Delchev, who was a declared opponent of a premature uprising, left for Macedonia. His purpose was to organise the fight against the decision from within and to meet Damé Gruev, who had just come out of prison, and win him over to the opposition to the Salonika Congress resolution.

In the spring of 1903, while these discussions for and against an uprising were being conducted with some ferocity, Macedonia and the Organisation were shaken by the desperate assassinations by dynamite carried out by a terrorist group known as the *gemici* (or 'sailors'), who were ready to make any sort of sacrifice. Hoping that, by threatening key positions held by European capitalists in Macedonia, that is in the Ottoman Empire, they would bring about intervention in the interests of the Macedonian people, they organised a series of attacks on important objects in Salonika. Thus, on 29th April 1903, they mined the French ship 'Guadalquivir'. This was followed by attacks on the Ottoman Bank building, the Post Office, the Gas Works, the German Club and other buildings. The Ottoman authorities sought refuge in ferocious reprisals: about two thousand people were arrested. The assassins did attract the attention of the whole of Europe to the position of the Macedonian people but in Macedonia itself the situation became even more tense.

Immediately after the Salonika assassinations the Organisation suffered an even graver blow. On 4th May 1903 Gotsé Delchev was killed in the village of Banitsa, near Serres. Delchev had been in Salonika for meetings with Gruev in connection with the decision in favour of an uprising. Disappointed by the attitude of Gruev, who supported the Congress' resolution, he was forced by the assassinations to leave Salonika. He set out for the Serres Revolutionary District, where he planned to organise a District Congress. However, together with his escort he was betrayed. Ambushed in the village of Banitsa, he died in a skirmish with Ottoman troops.

Delchev's death dealt a heavy blow to the Organisation. All those who were dedicated to the revolutionary work were affected by it. The extent of their grief is best witnessed by the number of folk songs and poems on the subject.

#### *Uprising in the Bitola District*

On the basis of the Salonika Congress resolution and in the heavy atmosphere of pressure and suffering resulting from the Sa-

lonika assassinations and Delchev's death, the Congress of the Bitola Revolutionary District was held from 2nd to 7th May, 1903 in the mountain village of Smilevo.

At the Smilevo Congress, which was chaired by Damé Gruev, the same two currents of opinion – for and against an uprising – were expressed. In the Bitola Revolutionary District the majority showed themselves in favour. This was a result of the specific situation in the District. The Revolutionary Organisation was very sound while the economic and political pressures were very considerable. Because of this even the broad masses of the people expressed a readiness for rebellion. Bearing this situation in mind, the District Congress passed a resolution in favour of revolt, despite the opposition to the Salonika resolution which had been voiced. The Congress elected a General Staff for the District which consisted of Damé Gruev, Anastas Lozanchev and Boris Sarafov. Other resolutions were passed which aimed to organise an uprising of the entire District as soon as was possible. The General Staff retained the right to determine the date of the uprising and also the responsibility for its implementation.

Immediately following the Smilevo Congress assemblies were held in all the revolutionary sub-districts. At these the measures for the preparation of the uprising were worked out. Special attention was paid to military preparation of both the insurgents and the people at large. Military exercises were introduced and food, arms, munitions and medical supplies were collected.

Finally, on 26th July 1903, when it was concluded that the situation in the District was ripe for revolt the General Staff met on the Victor's Summit, above Smilevo, in the Bitola District. They passed a resolution that the uprising be proclaimed. In the proclamation, which was issued on 28th July, the date of the uprising was fixed as 2nd August, the Feast of St. Elias. At the same time the Internal Organisation sent a Declaration to the Great Powers concerning the commencement of the Uprising. The General Staff made an announcement to the Directorate of the Eastern Railways in Macedonia at its Skopje headquarters.

The Uprising began, as arranged, on 2nd August. It spread through the greater part of Macedonia but was most intense in the Bitola District.

The first actions taken by the insurgents were to attack the beys' estates and to sever telephone and telegraph lines. In some places attacks on local garrisons were mounted and road communications put out of action. This led to the liberation of certain areas such as the Resen district, where camps for the refugee population were established, and later the Demir Hisar district.

### *The Krushevo Republic*

The insurgents' purpose was not restricted to attacking and destroying objects which were an embodiment of a hateful system. They aimed to take territory and inhabited places, to destroy the existing system and to build up a new revolutionary authority of the Macedonians and the other subjugated peoples living in Macedonia. The most eloquent examples of this were the taking of several smaller towns (Neveska and Klisura (Klissoura)) and the taking of Krushevo and the organisation of a revolutionary authority there.

The Bitola District Revolutionary Committee had entrusted the Krushevo Revolutionary Sub-district to the socialist Nikola Karev (1877 - 1905). He had been an opponent of the premature Salonika resolution in favour of an uprising. Nevertheless, after the definitive decision of the Smilevo Congress to raise a rebellion in the Bitola District, Karev invested all his revolutionary and intellectual capacities in the successful implementation of an uprising in his region. The main aim of his Staff was to seize the town of Krushevo.

Before the actual attack, as part of the preparations for the capture of the town, Karev's Staff issued a Proclamation announcing the Uprising. Then, according to plan, the attack on the town began during the night of 2nd August 1903. Concentrating their efforts on key objects – the Town Hall, the Post Office and other important buildings – the insurgents met particularly fierce opposition in their attack on the barracks, which housed some sixty soldiers. On 3rd August the town was liberated from Ottoman rule and the Staff Headquarters of the Krushevo insurgents was established there.

Krushevo is situated at an altitude of 1,250 metres on the mountain ridge which forms the western border of the Plain of Prilep. At the time of the Ilinden Uprising it had a population of about nine thousand, mostly Macedonians, Vlachs and Albanians.

As soon as the General Staff entered the town a start was made on giving form to the revolutionary authority of the insurgent people. An assembly of representatives from all three principal nationalities inhabiting the town was summoned and this assembly established the Council of the Republic, a representative body of sixty members, twenty from each nationality. From its number this body then elected an executive body of six, two from each nationality, which was presided over by Vangel Dinu, and was called the Temporary Government. The Temporary Government divided its sphere of competence into six sectors: police, judicial, financial, requisitionary, food supplies and health.

With the aim of attracting to its side or at least neutralising the entire neighbourhood, immediately on its assumption of authority the Temporary Government addressed itself to the people in a manifesto known as the Krushevo Manifesto. In what was in fact a declaration of the purpose of the Macedonian Revolution, full expression is given to the constitutional views of the Macedonian socialists on the creation of a Macedonian state which was the result of a popular uprising. This document of the revolutionaries who, in the course of the Ilinden Uprising, created the Krushevo Republic is ennobled by humanist ideas from the Communist Manifesto. It is imbued with a spirit of democratic revolution and the lofty principles of brotherhood and unity among the exploited, humiliated and enslaved peoples, regardless of nationality or faith. It was a summons to a united struggle to break the fetters of bondage and to united peaceful life and labour. At the same time it proclaimed the revolutionaries' readiness for self-sacrifice in the interests of freedom and justice and all for which the revolution had been raised.

On the domestic front, the Revolutionary Authority introduced a number of measures to strengthen and extend its influence. It nationalised several concerns which were of particular importance to the defence of the liberated territory and inaugurated the requisition of copper and copper vessels for the casting of munitions. A revolt tax was instituted and a count of livestock was made. In the military sphere extensive measures were taken to fortify the town. In Krushevo, in the depths of the Balkans and of Macedonia, the revolutionaries laid the foundations of a Macedonian republican state based on socialist ideas.

#### *Uprising in Other Regions of the Bitola Revolutionary District*

Large-scale popular uprisings also took place in other regions of the Bitola District. In the Kostur (Castoria) Revolutionary Region activities were particularly intensive in Popole, Koresha and in the district of Klisura (Klissoura). In this part of Macedonia the insurgents took the small town of Klisura (Klissoura) on 4th August and held it until 27th August. On 12th August a rebel detachment of seven hundred men captured the small town of Neveska.

The capture of Klisura (Klissoura) and Neveska was considerable victory for the Uprising in the Castoria District. It is noteworthy that here, as in the case of the Krushevo Republic, revolutionary authorities were established in the liberated territories. This

was a further contribution to the realisation of the Macedonian people's constitutional aspirations.

No less successful were the actions in the district of Lerin (Florina). Here, on 2nd August, an insurgent detachment of two thousand attacked and completely destroyed the railway line near Ekshi Su. The fighting which took place in various parts of the area led to the liberation of the mountainous western region of the Lerin (Florina) district.

In the Ohrid area the strongest insurrections took place in Malesiya, in Upper and Lower Debartsa and in Ortakol. These actions lasted for about two and a half months. The action in the mountain region of Rshanets, near Ohrid, in the course of which a shelter for the refugee population was organised, was of particularly epic proportions.

In the Kichevo region rebels laid siege to the town of Kichevo on 2nd August but did not succeed in taking it. Refugee camps were also set up in the Kichevo district. The first was established at Kopachka, where life was lived communally. The leader (voyvoda) Luka Gyerov commented: "The harvest is begun – in common, communism, without asking what is mine and what is yours."

Several rebel actions took place in the Prilep region. The action of Gyorché Petrov's band in which Yovan Yovanovich, the Montenegrin, took part is especially noteworthy. The actions were concerned with the severing of telephone lines between Prilep and Bitola and between Prilep and Veles and the destruction of bridges on the roads to Gradsko, Kichevo, Krushevo and Veles. Several attacks were mounted on beys' residences and estates and on Ottoman garrisons. The largest battle was near the Mariovo village of Chanishta. Waged by the combined forces of the Prilep and Castoria bands, it was marked by well-directed military actions.

#### *Uprising in Other Revolutionary Districts*

In contrast to rebel actions in the Bitola Revolutionary District, those in the other revolutionary districts of Macedonia – Salonika, Serres and Skopje – and that of Adrianople, outside Macedonia, were of less intensity. In the majority of these districts the actions were of a guerilla character, involving attacks on road communications and smaller military formations. However, since clashes were frequent the Ottoman authorities were forced to maintain large army units in these districts.

In the Salonika District seven attacks were carried out on the Salonika to Skopje and Salonika to Bitola railway lines. The railway bridges over the River Vardar suffered particularly heavily.

Sharp clashes took place in the Enidzhé Vardar and Tikvesh regions.

In the Serres District the District Congress ordained that the uprising should commence on 14th September. The actions were to be of a guerilla nature and to take place at a remove from inhabited places. On the Central Committee's order there was an unsuccessful attempt at collaboration with the Supremacists which only led to a greater evil. In the District major conflicts took place at Demir Hisar, Melnik, Nevrokop, Razlog and Gorna Dzhumaya.

There were also rebel attacks, though of less intensity, in the Skopje District. An attack on the railway line was mounted in the vicinity of Veles. Sharper conflicts occurred in the Kochani and Kratovo areas.

Rebel actions were also organised, after some delay, in the Adrianople Revolutionary District.

Seen as a whole the Ilinden Uprising was a reflection of large-scale heroism on the part of the Macedonian people and this gave it its popular and democratic character. Many representatives of the other nationalities inhabiting Macedonia most notably Vlachs, Albanians and Greeks – also took part in the Uprising. It benefitted even from the sympathies of the more progressive Turks.

### *Stifling of the Uprising*

The massiveness, extent and strength with which this uprising of the Macedonian people broke out came as a surprise to the public, both at home and abroad, but above all to both the Ottoman authorities and the leadership of the Uprising. The Ottoman organisation by continual confrontations, had yet not expected that the Uprising would be so extensive or that the subjugated Macedonian people would enter into it with such enthusiasm. Seriously disturbed by this unexpected phenomenon and even more by the results it achieved with the liberation of Krushevo, Neveska and Klisura (Klissoura) and the formation of other liberated territories in different parts of Macedonia, the Ottoman authorities concentrated an enormous army of 167,000 infantrymen, 3,700 cavalrymen and 444 guns in Macedonia to be prepared for any even less expected after-effects.

The first phase in this vast war consisted of systematic and unscrupulous attacks aimed at isolating and then eliminating the hotbeds of the Uprising. In the Bitola District the blow was aimed at Smilevo, where the District Congress had been held, and then Krushevo and the remaining liberated territories. The command of

the attack on Krushevo and the Krushevo Republic was entrusted to Bahtiar Pasha. He surrounded the town with an army of about twenty thousand. The 1,200 insurgents, ready to a man to lay down their lives in defence of their republic, offered firm resistance.

The battle for the town began on 12th August. The small rebel army opposed all the attacks heroically. The fighting at Sliva and Mechkin Kamen was particularly fierce. Almost the entire rebel detachment, under the command of the famous leader Pitu Guli, fell in these epic struggles on the field of battle in defence of the republic, the first Macedonian revolutionary authority.

The fighting for the town itself lasted throughout 12th August. Hard pressed on all sides by a vast army and exposed to fierce artillery bombardment, the insurgents were forced to abandon the town. This marked the end of the Krushevo Republic – the most significant result of the revolution.

After putting down liberated Krushevo, the Ottoman army systematically extinguished the other centres of rebellion in the Bitola District through a series of heavy engagements. For two and a half months a fierce war was waged on Macedonian territory between the bare-handed insurgents and the well-armed and thousands-strong Ottoman army. The world witnessed a suicidal conflict in which the Macedonian people courageously attempted unaided to cast off the centuries-long Ottoman bondage and gain a free life of their own. For this attempt, desperate in its bravery, they suffered harsh massacres. Two hundred and one inhabited areas were decimated and twelve thousand, four hundred homesteads fired leaving 70,836 people homeless. More than thirty thousand fled as refugees while 8,816 were killed. This was the bloody toll of the revolution. The consequences were, however, even graver than the bare figures suggest, especially for the Revolutionary Organisation. Built up with so much effort and patience in extremely unfavourable circumstances, it now faced catastrophe.

### *Echoes of the Uprising*

The Ilinden Uprising came as an unpleasant surprise not only to the Ottoman state but also to many other European states, both large and small, which hoped to fall heir to the Ottoman Empire. It was tempting to Austria-Hungary and to Russia, for example, since it destroyed the status quo in the Balkans. This was favoured by the two great powers because of their inability to realise their aspirations towards the Ottoman Empire on their own. Their aim was to protect themselves, by means of strictly meted out improvements in Macedonia, from any radical solutions which would prejudice their purposes. To this end, in February 1903, be-



fore the Uprising, they had secured certain anaemic reforms on the part of the Ottoman Empire. Other European powers were no less interested in the situation in Macedonia – that is, in the Ottoman Empire – but, with the exception of some trial proposals they made, their diplomatic representatives stood on the side-lines awaiting initiatives from Austria-Hungary and Russia which they hoped would solve the Macedonian situation.

The smaller Balkan states, which had aspirations towards Macedonia, were also concerned that there should be no change in the situation pertaining in the Balkans. They were, therefore, unfavourably disposed towards the success of the Uprising. For them a positive outcome to the liberating revolution in Macedonia would have meant an end to their territorial aspirations and this in turn would have meant an end to their illusions of mastery of the Balkans. This predetermined their negative attitude towards the Ilinden Uprising.

Progressive world public opinion reacted with a frank sympathy to the Macedonian people's struggle. The European and world press was full of news about the situation in Macedonia and the bloody reprisals taken by the Ottoman army's punitive expedition. Everywhere there rose up a wave of protest on behalf of the Macedonian people. Under the leadership of distinguished figures from cultural, artistic and political life such as Leo Tolstoy, Maxim Gorky, Anatole France, Jean Jaures, Victor Berard, Francis Dehaut de Pressensé, Artur Evans and Henry Brailsford, a whole movement of aid for the Macedonian people came into being. "Macedonian Committees" organised impressive meetings in Britain, France, Italy and America. In Britain alone, for example, about two hundred such meetings were organised. Meetings in support of the Macedonian people were held in Paris and Rome.

The South Slav peoples were also involved in this humane activity. In Ljubljana, Zagreb, Belgrade and Sofia the progressive social forces and progressive youth rose in support of the Macedonian people and collected aid for the suffering population.

An important rôle in bringing the Macedonian people's true situation before the world public was played by the associations of Macedonian emigrants and especially the Macedonian student groups as, for instance, in Switzerland, Russia, Belgrade, Sofia and Zagreb. Voydan Chernodrinski's theater group, called "Sorrow and Comfort", presented the situation of the Macedonian people to audiences in Bulgaria and Serbia through his play "Macedonian Blood Wedding".

Thus, despite the grave consequences of the Ilinden Uprising for Macedonia, it led to the truth about the Macedonian people, their struggle and aspirations, finding its way to the world public. The Ilinden Uprising left behind it a heritage of lasting ideals and

revolutionary traditions which penetrated deep into the Macedonian people's consciousness regarding their future struggles for the freedom and independence of their country.

## SITUATION AFTER THE ILINDEN UPRISING

### *Armed Propaganda of the Balkan States After the Uprising*

The choking of the Uprising, the scattering of the Organisation's armed force – the bands, the collecting and storing of arms against a better time, the unscrupulousness of the Ottoman punitive detachments, pillaging by Albanian groups in Western Macedonia, the unharvested crops, razed homesteads and hearths and the approach of winter created numerous problems difficult to resolve. In search of a solution to their difficulties a large percentage of the peasant population began to seek refuge in the bigger urban centres, such as Bitola and Prilep. Others sought sustenance and security as emigrants, political or economic, in Greece, Serbia, Rumania and Bulgaria, in other parts of the Ottoman Empire, in Austria-Hungary and in other western European countries. Between seven and eight thousand emigrated to North America.

In this grave situation the Revolutionary Organisation was the first to come to the aid of the population. Immediately after the Uprising, the Revolutionary Organisation made a move to close its ranks, to raise the population's morale and to ease their difficulties.

The difficult situation after the Uprising in Macedonia was even more complicated by the increased intensity of the armed propaganda of the neighbouring Balkan states – Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia and, at one stage, Rumania – whose aim, using funds from their state budgets and the strength of their military institutions, was to prepare the ground for the conquest or the partition of Macedonia. Foreign propagandist bands operated systematically and with perseverance, aiming to destroy the Macedonian national revolutionary movement, to eliminate all thinking that was independent of the desires of the Balkan pretenders and to create an atmosphere of fear and uncertainty among Macedonians and in this fashion to assimilate them more quickly and easily.

The purpose underlying Supremacist activity remained unchanged: to assume control of the Organisation and to subsume it to the requirements of the Bulgarian state. The chief obstacle to the realisation of this purpose lay in the leadership of the Serres Revolu-

lutionary District and in the person of Yané Sandanski in particular. Since none of the means employed so far had secured the desired results, the Supremacists organised an attack which was aimed to annihilate Melnik, the centre of revolutionary activity in the District, and its leader, Yané Sandanski. However the attack was discovered in time and it was completely routed in a fierce battle close to the village of Kashna on 7th April 1904. Both Supremacist activity and the struggles against Supremacist bands continued throughout Macedonia right up to the time of the Young Turk Revolution.

After the Ilinden Uprising the Revolutionary Organisation was confronted by a new factor in the form of its struggle against Serbian and Greek armed intervention.

Benefitting from the example afforded by Bulgarian Supremacist activity, the ruling circles in Serbia hoped to achieve by force of arms what they had failed to achieve through church and school propaganda.

Preparations for the entry of Serbian armed bands into Macedonia were set under way immediately after the Ilinden Uprising. To achieve an easier penetration of the territory, help was obtained from Boris Sarafov and from other declassed elements of the revolutionary movement.

From 1904 the action of the Serbian bands was intensified. Under the direct supervision of some of the most highly responsible members of Serbian government and military circles, in 1905 the Serbian action in Macedonia had at its disposal eleven bands of more than a hundred men. Penetrating systematically from the north towards central Macedonia, the principal goal was to secure by force of arms Serbian predominance in those parts of Macedonia on which she had designs and which would provide her with an outlet to the Aegean.

After the Ilinden Uprising the armed hands of the Greek andarts, whose aims were comparable to those of Bulgaria and Serbia, increased their activity in the southern regions of Macedonia. The appearance of Greek hands in Macedonia dates from before the Uprising, but it was after it that their activity became more systematic.

Here too the aim was the same: to ensure Greek domination of Macedonia. The forces of the church, the schools, the armed forces and diplomacy combined under direct government leadership in an attempt to achieve this aim. The Greek armed action was generously financed from the state budget and, like those of her rivals, was characterised by its massiveness. In the course of the year 1905 some eight hundred to a thousand men, the majority of whom had been recruited from Grete, were active in the bands in the Bitola Vilayet. Greek armed action was particularly violent in the

southern parts of Macedonia. Using all available means it endeavoured to break the Macedonian people's resistance, organising pogroms and razing entire villages.

### *The Mürzsteg Reforms*

The Ilinden Uprising and the ensuing situation in Macedonia brought about a reaction from the Great Powers and in particular from Austria-Hungary and from Russia, those whose interests in the Balkan countries were greatest. Their initial position was that the integrity of the Ottoman Empire should be preserved and that subsequently the developing situation in Macedonia should come under their control. While rebel activities there were still continuing these two powers made a move towards mutual agreement that they should take joint initiatives towards the amelioration of the situation in Macedonia. As a result of talks between the rulers of the two countries, Czar Nicholas II and Emperor Franz Joseph, which took place in the small Styrian town of Mürzsteg early in October 1903, what came to be known in history as the Mürzsteg Reforms were worked out.

The essence of the Reforms, which were based on the British government's proposals of 27th September, 1903, was: that two civilian agents, one from Austria-Hungary and one from Russia, be appointed to serve with the Chief Inspector Hilmi Pasha, and to be responsible for the implementation of reform in the Macedonian Vilayets on the part of the Ottoman administration; further, that a foreign general with a certain number of European officers as his attachés be appointed to reorganise the Ottoman gendarmerie in Macedonia. Reform of the administration and judiciary and the development of local self-government were also contemplated.

After much procrastination and considerable sabotage, the Ottoman government finally agreed to the proposed reforms but was determined in advance to obstruct their implementation. The Italian General de Giorgis was appointed Commandant of the Gendarmerie. Macedonia was divided into five sectors and foreign officers established in them. The Skopje Sanjak was allocated to Austrian officers, the Bitola Vilayet to Italians, the Salonika Vilayet to Russians, the Serres Sanjak to French and the Drama Sanjak to British.

The Mürzsteg Reforms did not reach the essence of the Macedonian situation and therefore could not satisfy the interests of the Macedonian people. For this reason they were condemned outright by the Internal Organisation.

Although the Organisation justifiably condemned the Reforms they nevertheless had certain positive features. Firstly they

made possible a more complete affirmation of the Macedonian people's struggle for freedom in Europe and in the world. Furthermore the actual implementation of the Reforms demanded a widening of their basis to include other areas of life. Thus they brought forward the implementation of the financial reforms which took place towards the close of 1905, and they formed the basis of further reforms in Macedonia. In this respect especially deserving of attention is the plan which came as a result of the meeting, known as the Reval meeting, between the sovereigns of Britain and Russia at Reval in June 1908. In the plans which issued from this meeting the introduction of autonomy for Macedonia was contemplated. The Young Turk Revolution, however, hindered the implementation of this project. The entire reformist activity of the European powers in Macedonia was brought to a halt at the end of 1909.

#### *National Revolutionary Movement after the Uprising*

After the Uprising the Revolutionary Organisation found itself in an extremely difficult situation. There had been a disintegration of the town and village organisations, a severing of their mutual links. A period of passivity ensued and of loss of orientation and faith on the part of the peasant masses. This was not characteristic, however, only of the members of the Organisation. Its leadership was also affected. Communications between District Committees and the Central Committee were effectually broken. The leading positions in the Central Committee were held by virtually unknown people who had no influence on the Organisation. This led to the dissolution of the Central Committee as the leading body of the Organisation in the Spring of 1904.

Of course the disorganisation which occurred in the ranks of the revolutionary movement was not the only characteristic of the post-Uprising period. The Organisation and the entire movement were faced with many new problems posed both by the increasing emergence of national thinking and by existing internal relationships as well as by the continued presence of armed foreign propaganda. Because of this the years immediately after the Uprising, 1904 and 1905, were of exceptional importance to the Macedonian people's national revolutionary movement. These were the years during which the split between the different currents within it widened and during which the character of the movement became more nationally differentiated.

They were the years in which the Macedonian national revolutionary movement and national thinking were enriched by the theoretical study of Krsté Petkov Misirkov, За македонските па-

боти (On Macedonian Matters). In this work he defends with scholarly arguments the existence of a Macedonian nation and raises the question of the affirmation of the Macedonian language as a literary language. In this the national revolutionary movement gained a powerful weapon in its fight against foreign influence in Macedonia.

#### *Efforts to Consolidate the Internal Organisation*

The extensive popular participation in the Ilinden Uprising and the results achieved in the course of it made it abundantly clear that the Macedonian people had been fighting with force of arms and spilling their own blood in order to gain independence. On the other hand the Uprising and more especially its unhappy conclusion showed unambiguously that the old and undemocratic forms taken by the organisation of the revolutionary movement had been outlived. Under the pressure of objectively created circumstances soon after the Uprising there began intensive consultations and discussions regarding a way out of the critical situation and the opening up of new perspectives. These continued, with varying strength, until the Organisation's General Congress was held at the Monastery of Rila in 1905.

The first assessments of the unsuccessful Uprising and of the future of the revolutionary movement came towards the end of 1903 and carried on into the first half of 1904. These took place in Sofia where the majority of the movement's leading personnel had congregated after the Uprising.

At the outset of the discussions two main currents of the revolutionary movement found expression: the conservative, led from beyond the frontier by the delegates Matev and Tatarchev, and the progressive, labelled the left, led by the leadership of the Serres Revolutionary District. The conservatives favoured the retention of the movement's old forms of organisation and, with no regard for the consequences, declared themselves in favour of fresh rebel actions in the Spring of 1904; the left categorically opposed the preservation of the old order in the organisational structure and stood for democratisation of the revolutionary movement, decentralisation and a franchise which would allow expression to individual initiative and a freer flow of democratic forces.

At the Sofia discussions the left gained the victory. This resulted in the issuing of a 'Directive for the Future Activity of the Organisation' which laid down the left's views on the future of the revolutionary movement. This directive was, in effect, the movement's first programme and political declaration in the new cir-

cumstances. Until the time of the Young Turk Revolution it was to be the source of ideas and actions whose underlying aim was democratism and independence for the Macedonian national revolutionary movement.

Special 'Instructions' were issued concerning the implementation of the directive. These reflected in concrete terms the views of the left and their programme for the function and activity of the Revolutionary Organisation.

In addition to these discussions outside Macedonia, initiatives were taken immediately after the Uprising to start discussions within the country itself. These initiatives had a dual purpose: to establish contacts with Serbia which might facilitate the acceptance and support of the revolutionary movement and, secondly, to take such measures on the domestic front as would heal as quickly as possible the wounds left by the Uprising and would render the consolidation of the Organisation possible.

In October 1903 talks were held between representatives of the Revolutionary Organisation and representatives of Serbian propaganda. The talks dealt with the delegation of an Organisation representative to Belgrade and explored the possibility of the pro-Serbian element's entry into the revolutionary movement and working for its aims. These talks however produced no results.

On the home front, under the particular influence of Damé Gruev and Gyorché Petrov, who had not left the country after the Uprising, action was taken to renew the revolutionary movement and discussions on its future were held. The polarisation mentioned above in the case of the representatives in Sofia also occurred in Macedonia itself. Here as well two basic currents were differentiated – the left and the right.

Following extensive discussions throughout the Organisation abroad and at home, it was realised that the way to the consolidation and reconstruction of the movement lay through the convening of Congresses in the Revolutionary Districts. These were regarded as the most democratic forum for a broad treatment of the organisational problems and for the election of delegates to the General Congress. For their part the District Congresses were of immediate and primary importance in the absence of a central leadership and in the Organisation's virtually leaderless state. The situation as it existed encouraged separatist tendencies in the Revolutionary Districts and was in fact leading to the disintegration of the Organisation.

The first practical step towards overcoming the existing situation within the Organisation was taken by the Bitola Revolutionary District which convened the Prilep Congress in May 1904. For the sake of greater security this Congress was mobile and continually changed its venue. Among the thirteen delegates who attended

were Damé Gruev, Gyorché Petrov, Peré Toshev, Hristo Uzunov and Gyorgyi Sugarev.

At this Congress also the two fundamental currents were given voice. On the one side was Damé Gruev, who declared himself in favour of the retention of the Organisation's old, centralist methods and the revolutionary movement's former manner of functioning. On the other side were Gyorché Petrov and Peré Toshev, who favoured decentralisation and franchise. The question of the chauvinistic propaganda activity of the Balkan states occupied a special place at this Congress and was roundly condemned.

The Prilep Congress of the Bitola Revolutionary District put forward a proposal that, in the interests of a more rapid consolidation of the Organisation, there be formed from representatives of all the Districts a body whose special brief would be to accelerate the creation of unity within the revolutionary movement.

Subsequent to the Congress of the Bitola District other Congresses were convened in the course of 1904 and 1905: Skopje Revolutionary District (January 1905), Salonika Revolutionary District (June-July 1905), Strumitsa Revolutionary District (Summer 1905) and Serres Revolutionary District (July-August 1905).

These Congresses of the Revolutionary Districts and Regional Assemblies of the Organisation, at which in the majority of cases delegates to the Congress were elected, facilitated the best survey to date of the state of the revolutionary movement. They also made possible an examination of its successes and shortcomings and the path that the movement should take if it wished to survive. A survey of the positions of the Organisation's two ideological currents was a further outcome of these Congresses and Assemblies.

The District Congresses revealed the absence of a clear and precisely defined programme of the movement's aims. This lack was frequently a source of conflict and mistrust of the Organisation abroad.

The Serres, Salonika and, in large measure, the Strumitsa District Congresses, at which the two ideological currents led to a mobilisation of forces for the decisive battle at the General Congress, also emphasized the need to change the movement's basis. A conversion from a peasant to an urban movement was favoured which would rely on the urban element of craftsmen, the petty bourgeoisie and the workers. The removal of teachers, a category economically dependent upon the Bulgarian Exarchate, from leading positions in the movement was favoured. In order to safeguard independence of decision-making and functioning the restriction of Bulgarian Exarchate activity was favoured and also the extension of the right to local self-government, the elimination of the three propaganda machines, the elaboration and clarification of the concept of autonomy and the raising of Macedonian national

and revolutionary consciousness. In sum the District Congresses raised, as never before, a complete spectrum of urgent problems which demanded appropriate treatment in the movement's future programme. All these problems, a number of which had already been posed by the Directive, arose out of the interests of the differing ideological and political currents in the Organisation.

### *The Rila Congress and Subsequent Situation in Macedonia*

Despite the sharp contradictions between the separate currents and among the Districts concerning the future character of the Organisation, everybody agreed about one thing: that the General Congress should be held as soon as possible to bring to an end the abnormal situation pertaining in the revolutionary movement.

Under pressure from the membership and in view of the situation in Macedonia a move to summon the General Congress was finally made in the Autumn of 1905. All the elected delegates met in Sofia for a preliminary counselling session at the end of September 1905. The location of the Congress came under discussion and whether it should be held within Macedonia or outside. After lengthy discussion a compromise solution was reached: that the Congress should be held on Bulgarian territory but at the Monastery of Rila, close to Macedonia, and that future Congresses of the Organisation should by regulation be held in Macedonia.

The Congress commenced at the beginning of October 1905 and lasted for a whole month. Twenty-two delegates attended from all over Macedonia. The same problems which had been under discussion since the Uprising were on the Agenda: past activity, the current situation and the future. Particularly fierce discussions occurred about Point Three of the Agenda: "Ordering and management of the Organisation". The contradictions between the two currents which had been voiced at the District Congresses were expressed here also. In the discussion on this point and on all other points of principle the left was victorious, and this was reflected in the composition of the new Central Committee.

After several weeks' work Congress succeeded in formulating the basic lines for the Organisation's future work: the questions of the ultimate aim of the Organisation, of foreign interference in Macedonia, of the Mürszteg Programme and of the all-inclusiveness of the Organisation's activity, incorporating within its sphere of interest the entire social and economic life of the people.

The ultimate aim of the movement was the liberation of Macedonia. The Congress concluded that the united struggle of all the

peoples living in Macedonia should now be, as it had been before, the fundamental means with which to combat Ottoman rule. The Uprising should be the final result of long preparatory revolutionary activity on the part of the organised people.

The Congress unanimously condemned interference from abroad by foreign propaganda. It entrusted the Organisation with the task of using all its forces and all the means at its disposal to eliminate such propaganda. Special emphasis was given to the negative view the Congress took of "Bulgarian state nationalism" and all "the delarations and deeds of the Exarchate motivated by the spirit of Bulgarian state nationalism". The Congress penned a special letter warning the Supremacists to desist from sending bands into Macedonia.

The Mürszteg Reforms were totally condemned by the Congress. The resolutions of the Rila Congress, seen as a whole, made it clear that it was informed by the spirit of the ideas and practices of the Organisation's progressive current, namely the left. This could also be seen in the election of the members of the Central Committee, and from the fundamental documents which it passed – the Constitution and Rule Book. Thus the progressive current in the revolutionary movement had won an undoubted victory.

Very shortly after the Congress however it was made clear that the unity thus achieved had no lasting foundations. The Rila Congress had been unable to halt the polarisation of the ideological and political currents within the movement. This continued and with it a tensing of the relations between the two groups. The end result was a split in the Organisation.

The right, which had been defeated at the Congress, had no intention of implementing the Resolutions of the Congress in a disciplined manner. The practical application of these Resolutions would have led toward the constitutional and national establishment of the Macedonian people, which was not in the interests of the Bulgarian state nor of the social group which was in league with it in Macedonia. For this reason they took steps to destroy the unified activity of the Organisation and at this price to render the various Revolutionary Districts independent.

The split became public and open over the convening of the second Annual Congress of the Organisation. According to the Resolutions of the Rila Congress future Congresses were to be held in Macedonia and only revolutionaries who had spent a certain time working in Macedonia in the course of the year were eligible for election as delegates. But it was manifestly clear that the representatives of the right had no intention of adhering to these rules. Lengthy and difficult discussions among the various District representatives took place in Sofia about the location of the Congress. Finally, to avoid a split, the compromise was reached that the se-

cond Congress of the Organisation should also take place at the Monastery of Rila. However the Congress did not take place. The conflict between the two currents could not be staved off any longer. It broke out immediately before the planned Congress and led to the splitting of the Organisation. The Declaration issued by the right brought to light the profound difference of principle between the two currents. The right wished the revolutionary movement to act in accordance with Bulgarian state policy and be financed from the Bulgarian state budget. These were proposals which the left could not accept under any circumstances. Thus a merciless battle between the two wings of the revolutionary movement began. In its course, for the sake of Macedonia's integrity and the revolutionary movement's independence, the left liquidated Boris Sarafov and Ivan Garvanov towards the end of November 1907 as having been agents in all the anti-Organisation plots. This was followed by a final sanctioning of the split. In March 1908, under the aegis of the Bulgarian government, the right wing held its Küstendil Congress which carried out a revision of the Resolutions of the Rila Congress.

Following the Rila Congress, and especially after the split, the left wing of the Macedonian national revolutionary movement, headed by the leadership of the Serres Revolutionary District, adopted a course leading towards the complete national characterisation of the movement, and towards its adaptation to current circumstances, that is to say towards the realisation and future deepening of the principles of the Directive. It worked tirelessly to attract all the progressive democratic forces, regardless of faith or nationality, and to link up with other democratic movements within the Ottoman Empire. At all its District Annual Congresses up to 1908 and especially in its two open letters published on the occasion of the assassination of Sarafov and Garvanov it revealed the true nature of the opponents of Macedonia's independence from any encroachment whatsoever with all available means.

The Joint Congress of the left, held towards the end of May 1908, deserves particular attention. Delegates from the Serres, Strumitsa and Salonika District Organisations were present. This Congress, which took place immediately prior to the Young Turk Revolution, was of exceptional significance. It not merely confirmed the general line for the defence of the revolutionary movement's independence but also opened up new prospects for co-operation with other progressive movements in the Balkans and, for the first time, raised seriously the question of a Balkan Federation.

The development of the Macedonian national revolutionary movement after the Ilinden Uprising is characterised by the same polarisation as before and by the eventual split between its distinct

forces. This was a time when armed propaganda in Macedonia on the part of the neighbouring states was constantly on the increase and the results of this were extremely grave as far as the Macedonian people were concerned. It was also a time in which the Revolutionary Organisation suffered heavy losses of personnel. Nikola Karev, Dame Gruev, Hristo Uzunov, Georgi Sugarev and other distinguished revolutionaries fell as victims of persecution.



## MACEDONIA FROM THE YOUNG TURK REVOLUTION TO THE BALKAN WARS

### THE YOUNG TURK REVOLUTION AND REGIME IN MACEDONIA

#### *Preparations for and Conduct of Young Turk Revolution in the course of 1908*

The Young Turk movement in the Ottoman state dated from the mid-seventies of the nineteenth century. It was linked to the emergence of new social forces in the Empire, namely the bourgeoisie, a European-educated intelligentsia and the young officer class. Its growth was more intense at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth when the foundations of what came to be known as the Ottoman Committee for Unification and Progress were laid. The aims of this organisation were to safeguard the integrity of the Ottoman Empire and to abolish absolutism in favour of a return to constitutionalism, i.e. the reform of the Ottoman state.

Parallel with the Young Turk movement other groups appeared within the Empire such, for example, as the Moslem Federation. The social basis of this particular group lay in the Ottoman petty bourgeoisie and the plebeian urban masses and its political concepts were more radical than those of the Young Turks. The Moslem Federation, for instance, declared itself in favour of agrarian reform, of a reduction of working hours to ten, of an increase in workers' wages and of autonomy for the various national areas. They favoured the establishment in Macedonia of a self-governing area within the framework of the Ottoman Empire.

The growth of the national revolutionary movements of the subjugated peoples in the country, especially after the Ilinden Uprising and the events which immediately followed it, stimulated a reaction on the part of the Young Turks. They sought to establish contact with representatives of the national movements and to form a united front from which to oppose the existing regime. At

their Congress, held in co-operation with representatives of the national movements in Paris in 1907, they elaborated a concrete programme for joint action. The Macedonian revolutionary movement was not represented at this Congress since Hristo Matov, the leader of the right wing, had rejected the invitation to attend. Nevertheless, the left accepted its proposals for co-operation which led to the signing of what came to be known as the Nevrokop Programme.

The Young Turk Movement established a firm hold in Macedonia. From 1905 onwards Salonika was the political centre of this flourishing movement. Among the reasons for this especial growth were the revolutionary atmosphere prevailing in Macedonia, its specifically international character and the fact that there the constitutional sovereignty of the Ottoman Empire was seriously threatened. The army stationed in Macedonia was in the hands of the Young Turks.

Consequently, especially after the British – Russian meeting at Reval and the subsequent plan for Macedonia which would effectually lead to its gaining independence, the Young Turks accelerated their preparations for rebellion. On 3rd July, 1908, Niyazi Bey, Commander of the Ottoman Garrison in Resen, defected with his entire unit. Shortly afterwards considerable areas of western Macedonia (the regions of Prespa, Ohrid, Struga and Debar) all came under his authority. Other officers followed Niyazi Bey's example. The attempt to stifle the Young Turk Rebellion was unsuccessful and caused it to spread all the more. On 22nd July the rebels liberated Bitola, where they released all political prisoners, both Macedonians and Albanians. On 23rd July large-scale demonstrations led by the Young Turk Committee broke out in Salonika. There too political prisoners were released. With the watchwords of Freedom and Brotherhood and Unity, there was a general fraternisation among peoples who had until recently been at loggerheads with one another. It was under pressure from this large-scale movement that, on 24th July, the Sultan reinstated the Constitution of 1876. Thus began the period of Young Turk rule, welcomed initially with great enthusiasm by the subjugated and exploited peoples and the working masses.

It soon became clear, however, that the expectation on the part of the popular masses that the Young Turk regime would concern itself with more profound social and political reforms had not been justified. The Young Turks had seized power but they retained all the existing feudal institutions, including that of the Sultan himself, Abdul Hamid. This narrowed even more the insufficiently broad social basis of the movement.

The forces of reaction exploited the incompleteness and indecisiveness of the new regime and, on 13th April, 1909, staged a

counter coup in Istanbul. The Young Turks were routed from parliament and from the government. Forced once more to fight for power they again sought the support of the Macedonians. The European section of the Ottoman Empire rose up against the counter-revolution. Activity was centred on Salonika. A division of 1,200 Macedonian revolutionaries, led by Yané Sandanski, Todor Panitsa and Hristo Chernopeev, joined forces with the Young Turks. An attack on Istanbul, where the counter-revolutionaries had built themselves in, was organised. On 24th April 1909, after three days' fighting, the counter-revolution was overthrown. The Macedonian people had played a courageous and important rôle in these events.

The victory over the reactionaries in Istanbul marked the completion of the Young Turk Revolution. Abdul Hamid was deposed and parliamentary rule re-established. But this also marked the end of any progressive development in Young Turk policies. Having assumed power, the Young Turks adopted a course which safeguarded their own class interests and the domination of the Turkish ethnic group. They reinforced the pressure of reaction upon the subjugated peoples by their legislation against armed bands, against worker's strikes and against political and other associations.

#### *Situation of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement under the Young Turk Regime*

The Joint Congress of the left wing of the Macedonian national revolutionary movement, held in Bansko in the Spring of 1908, led not only to a relatively closer union of the movement's progressive currents but also to the creation of premises for co-operation with the Young Turks and with other political movements in Macedonia. This was demonstrated by the elaboration and signing, in July 1908, of what was known as the Nevrokop Programme by the Nevrokop Young Turk Committee, the Organisation's Nevrokop Revolutionary Committee and the Nevrokop Greek Committee. Written into this Programme were several of the basic points from the left's agrarian policy. During the Young Turk regime and up to the formation of the People's Federative Party one of the chief pre-occupations of the left wing was the organised unification of its ranks. Under the leadership of Yané Sandanski, it adopted the name of the Macedonian – Adrianople Revolutionary Organisation (MARO – MOPO). The aim of this organisation – as its name testifies – was the mobilisation of all the progressive forces of the re-

revolutionary movement regardless of which part of Macedonia or of the Ottoman Empire they belonged to.

On 1st August 1908 the new organisation issued a Manifesto aimed at all the nationalities within the Ottoman Empire. It contained the programme and aims for which the MARO (MOPO) was to fight under the Young Turk regime. At the same time it issued a Declaration addressed to the Young Turk Central Committee in Salonika. In this Declaration the readiness to co-operate with the Young Turks in the future in the interests of improving the material and political life of the masses was stressed. Despite this expression of its readiness to co-operate the MARO (MOPO), having learned from bitter experience, retained the use of arms as a safeguard of its existence and policy.

In preparation for legal activity, the MARO (MOPO) took steps to transform itself into a lawful political party with a programme of its own. In August 1909, after overcoming various organisational, political and ideological problems, the forces of the left held a Founding Congress of their own political party, the People's Federative Party.

In the new party's programme the political views of the left, systematically constructed since the time of the Ilinden Uprising, were fully expressed.

Regarding the political system the programme favoured complete de-centralisation and self-government for the different regions of the Ottoman state. Its essence was the transformation of the Ottoman Empire into a federative state, with Macedonia as one of the self-governing federal units. In the sphere of economic relations the programme was in favour of a final elimination of the remains of feudalism, in favour of an agrarian reform which would benefit the peasant population, of the protection of hired labour and of a reform of the tax system which would bring in a progressive income tax. The programme favoured the implementation of full civil and political rights.

The PFP (HΦΠ) considered that with such a programme the social development within the Ottoman Empire would make a continuous reorganisation of the state possible. Attempts at such a transformation arose from the recognition that, given the historical circumstances and the territorial aspirations of the neighbouring states towards Macedonia, Macedonia's territorial integrity would be safeguarded by such measures and the development of Macedonian statehood would be made possible within a federally constituted Ottoman state.

Taking steps towards the realisation of its programme of demands, the PFP (HΦΠ) embarked upon large-scale political activity. It attracted the broad masses of the people to its legal political activity. Mass meetings were held virtually throughout Macedonia,

and especially in the course of the period from January to March 1909. At these meetings resolutions were passed which demanded broader economic and political rights and, first and foremost, an answer to the agrarian question.

The PFP's exertion of political pressure on the Young Turk regime for the attainment of more extensive rights led to an increase of tension in relations between the two sides. The PFP instigated an action against foreign propaganda and in particular against the Exarchate's domination of the management of church and school affairs. Its aim was to remove the schools from the grasp of the Exarchate and to place them under local authorities. As a result, about seventy schools came under local authority management in the school year 1909/10.

In spite of these PFP achievements on the political front the disunity of the forces which constituted the party, i.e. the disunity of the left of the Macedonian national movement, the PFP was unable to develop any relatively firm internal unity. This led to a series of crises in the organisation especially after the beginning of 1910. These arose from struggles between different factions and from increased counter-revolutionary pressure from the Young Turk regime. The result was the secession, or rather exclusion of certain currents from the party. This, of course, narrowed the party's political basis and restricted its activity, making its liquidation by the Young Turks relatively straightforward, when in August 1910 the reactionary law against political associations came into force.

The banning of the PFP was a heavy blow to the Macedonian national revolutionary movement and brought on a fresh crisis. On the one hand there was the right wing which had put itself completely at the service of the Bulgarian state's chauvinist policy; from the middle of 1910, under the leadership of Todor Aleksandrov, it once again took refuge in the Supremacists' methods of provocation and terrorisation in Macedonia. On the other hand there were the progressive Macedonian forces which, deprived of any firm organisational unity, were not a serious political factor that could offer opposition to the reactionary pressure of the Young Turks or to the chauvinist activity of Balkan propaganda. In the course of 1911 a determined voice was raised against Supremacist actions and the penetration of Macedonia by foreign armed bands. An attempt was made to summon a church and people's assembly in Salonika. The aim was to end the Exarchate leadership of the ecclesiastical and educational life of Macedonia. The initiative was taken to organise a new political party in Macedonia – the Ottoman Progressive Party. However, none of these initiatives achieved the desired result since the national movement was then undergoing

restructuring and consolidation in the new circumstances and this process was brought to a halt by the outbreak of the Balkan Wars.

#### *Foreign Propaganda Activity under Young Turk Rule*

The strength and scale of the declared support by the popular masses in Macedonia for the Young Turk regime brought about a temporary halt in the activity of the armed bands and led the foreign propagandists to seek a means of adapting themselves to the new situation. In place of the bands political associations appeared which employed means suitable to the new atmosphere in their continued struggle for the same chauvinist end, namely the conquest of Macedonia.

In September 1908 the Bulgarian propagandists founded their own League of Bulgarian Clubs whose ultimate purpose was to render any activity on the part of the left wing impossible, thereby becoming themselves the dominant factor in political life in Macedonia.

The League came under the direct management of an emissary of the Bulgarian government and included Exarchate supporters, overt and covert Supremacists and a certain section of the wealthier merchants. The League's underlying aim was to sabotage as much as it could the stabilisation of the Young Turk regime and in particular to compromise the sincere co-operation between the left wing of the P.F.P. and the regime, by creating an atmosphere of mistrust and of conflict between them.

With the passing of the law against political associations the League was disbanded but the forces which had created it continued to work for the interests of Greater Bulgarian state aims.

In similar fashion the Serbian propagandists also formed a political organisation, an association of "Ottoman Serbs". This organisation too, like its Bulgarian counterpart, executed in a disciplined manner the directives of the state policy – in this case that of Serbia – concerning the suppression of the influence of rival propaganda and concerning the imposition of its own influence in Macedonia. With the coming into force of the laws against political associations, it also was disbanded but various church and school factors continued to be active in Macedonia, maintaining a continuity in the above-mentioned Greater Serbian policy.

The Greek propagandists likewise established societies and organisations of various sorts which, under the conditions of the Young Turk regime, carried on the fight to realise Greater Greek aspirations towards Macedonia. The leading place among these organisations was occupied by the Greek Clubs.

Even without these newly-formed organisations Greek propaganda had at its disposal a very large number of highly developed means of activity in Macedonia. Among these the Patriarchate of Constantinople occupied a special place. The creation of the Young Turk regime and the exclusion of the Andart bands, however, caused a rapid loss of ground. This led, as in the Bulgarian case, to an inimical disposition towards the new regime. This in turn led to a rapprochement and the formation of a joint Exarchate and Patriarchate bloc, despite extreme mutual unfriendliness.

In addition to these foreign propaganda organisations Albanian Clubs appeared in Western Macedonian towns during the period of the Young Turk regime. Their underlying purpose was the creation of conditions favourable to the national and political emancipation of those of Albanian nationality.

The general crisis and the reactionary degradation of the Young Turk regime from 1910 onwards throughout the Ottoman Empire but particularly in Macedonia led to extreme tension in socio-economic relations and an increase of national antagonism. This rendered the political situation in Macedonia acutely complicated which, in turn, led to a return of pre-Hurriyet anarchy. Thus the settlement in Macedonia by the Young Turk authorities of some two hundred thousand refugees and the campaign to collect up arms, implemented with violence, created conditions which allowed the Supremacists and other inimically disposed groups to renew their terrorist practices. However, in contrast to the earlier period, new methods were put into operation. Organised assassinations of innocent members of the population, particularly on market days, had very grave consequences. They stimulated counter-activities on the part of the authorities and the Turkish population which ended in pogroms. Between 1910 and 1912 dozens of such assassinations, known as the "donkey assassinations", were staged in various places in Macedonia. Their name arose from the method, by which donkeys were loaded with time bombs and subsequently abandoned in market places.

For its part the Albanian Uprising, which had broken out in 1909, was beginning to take on ever broader proportions. This meant that the situation of the Ottoman Empire, both internally and externally, became ever more difficult.

#### *Workers' and Socialist Movements in Macedonia after the Young Turk Revolution*

After the Ilinden Uprising the Macedonian socialist group, which had joined the ranks of the revolutionary movement and

had taken part in the Uprising, had been exposed to pressure from the right wing and from Supremacist elements in certain revolutionary districts. This meant that, in these districts, its activity was severely limited.

Outside Macedonia, in Sofia, under the influence of the Bulgarian Social Democratic Party, the Macedonian and Adrianople Socialist Group was formed in place of the former Macedonian Revolutionary Socialist Group. The new group's task was to spread the socialist movement throughout Macedonia and the Adrianople district. Under its influence socialist groups and workers' circles were founded in several towns in Macedonia. Independently of this activity, wherever favourable conditions existed, close co-operation with the revolutionary movement continued and was one of the principal factors leading to the movement's democratisation.

After the Ilinden Uprising the workers' movement in Macedonia was characterised by the increasingly organised economic struggle it waged for the protection of workers' rights. The first strikes began in the course of 1904 in the Skopje and Bitola districts. This wave of strikes and of tariff actions expanded noticeably in 1906. The textile workers of Salonika, Serres, Voden (Edessa) and the shoemakers of Skopje came out on strike for a reduction in working hours and an increase in wages.

In spite of the workers' efforts to improve their own economic condition the lack of an appropriate organisation and the unbridled activity of chauvinist propaganda effectively reduced the efficiency of the workers' struggles.

With the victory of the Young Turk Revolution in 1908 the situation changed. In Salonika, a city with over thirty thousand workers, a trade union for commercial workers and officials with more than a thousand members was formed. The tobacco-workers, carpenters and printers all formed their own unions. Occupational and local trade union organisation were also formed in the Macedonian interior, particularly in the course of 1909, in, for example, Skopje, Bitola, Veles, Kumanovo, Voden (Edessa), Serres, Drama and Kavalla. In a word the democratisation of public life within the Ottoman Empire began the organised association of workers through trade unions, part of a continuous process of the unification of the workers. For example, the Central Workers' Committee, was established in Salonika in 1911; and in the course of 1911, after the First Congress of the Tobacco-workers of Macedonia and Thrace, the General League of the Tobacco-workers' Trade Unions of Turkey-in-Europe was founded.

The organisation of the workers had a positive influence on the successful conduct of strikes to improve the workers' lives and working conditions. The strikes, seen as a method of obtaining

economic rights, became ever more massive in character. The strike of Salonika railwaymen and dockers, in which the railwaymen working on the Salonika to Skopje line joined, was particularly extensive.

The Young Turk Revolution made it possible to form socialist associations. These usually developed out of previously formed workers' societies, as was the case in both Veles and Bitola. Particularly eminent among them was the Skopje Social Democratic Organisation, founded in January 1909, under whose leadership the first 1st May celebration in the Ottoman Empire took place in 1909. The extended socialist activity found expression in the publication of the newspaper Социјалистичка зора (Socialist Dawn,) Работничка искра (Workers' Spark) and Ergatis. From the very start the activity of the Macedonian socialists was directed towards internal unification, towards the creation of conditions for the formation of a single socialist party within the Ottoman Empire and towards the uniting and synchronising of their activities with those of the other Balkan social democratic parties.

Vasil Glavinov, Mihail Tsokov, Dushan Tsekich and Stoyan Divlev were the representatives of the Macedonian social democratic organisations at the First Balkan Social Democratic Conference, held in Belgrade from 7th to 9th January 1910. At the Conference they opposed the aspirations of the Balkan states towards the conquest of Macedonia and declared their support for Macedonia's right to a free existence and social progress. After the Conference the Macedonian socialists invested considerable effort in popularising the idea of a Balkan federation consisting of free republics, of which Macedonia would be one. At the same time they signally increased their efforts to unite the socialist forces in the country into a single social democratic party. As a result of these attempts a conference attended by delegates from the socialist organisations of Salonika, Skopje, Bitola, Veles and Tetovo was summoned in Salonika in December 1910. After lengthy discussions the assembly stressed the need for the unification of the country's socialist forces into a single political party of the working class. The two Salonika socialist organisations were entrusted with the task of formulating a statute and programme which would then be passed by the Founding Congress which was to be summoned in the course of 1911.

But although unanimity had been reached and the appropriate measures taken to summon the Founding Congress, it was not held in 1911. Important among the reasons for this were the still unripe conditions in Macedonia itself and the lack of any indication of support from the Serbian and Bulgarian Social Democratic Parties.

The disunity of the socialist forces in Macedonia and in the Ottoman Empire was a grievous failure on the part of the democratic forces in the face of the ill-starred events of 1911 and 1912-13. In fact the Macedonian socialists raised their voice decisively against Italian imperialism and Ottoman reaction and against the ever-increasing danger of war in the Balkans, declaring their support for a democratic alliance of the Balkan peoples in a federative community. However this declaration did not have the significance and power of the voice of an organised force.

Finally, immediately prior to the Balkan Wars, the anarcho-socialist movement the Red Brothers or International Revolutionary Balkan Association appeared in Macedonia, with cells in Salonika, Strumitsa, Kumanovo and Kratovo.

#### *Cultural Activity in Macedonia in the Period 1908-12*

The victory of the Young Turk Revolution in 1908 created relative public peace in the country. This made possible the start of significant socio-political and cultural activity in all the milieux of Macedonian society. Various political, professional, cultural, educational, physical training and musical societies, associations and organisations began to appear. New newspapers, journals and books began to emerge. Progressive Macedonian forces made use of the new freedom but so too did the agents of Balkan propaganda.

The Teachers' Organisation was a significant professional association whose formation had been made possible by the Young Turk Revolution. It was formed at the same time as the People's Federative Party, August 1909, in Salonika. The fundamental aim of this organisation, established during a continuous struggle with pro-Exarchate currents in the teachers' movement, was that of independence from the Exarchate. The Teachers' Organisation also aimed to ensure the protection of teachers' civil and political rights; to democratise educational activity and purge it of chauvinism and clericalism; to co-operate with all the progressive forces in the country; and to engage in cultural, educational and political activity. The Organisation brought out its own paper *Учителски глас* (Teachers' Voice), which was published in Salonika.

The cultural and educational activity of the organised teachers was particularly evident. They were involved in the opening of libraries and reading-rooms, in the formation of theatre groups

and the staging of cultural, artistic and theatrical performances and in organising the Miladinov brothers' fiftieth jubilee celebrations.

The Young Turk Revolution had created a climate of toleration which made possible the appearance of the periodical *Културно единство* (Cultural Unity), edited by Gyorché Petrov. The group which was centred on this journal undertook to co-operate with all the Macedonian national forces, particularly in the cultural and educational fields, in order to achieve "the desired cultural unity which would counterbalance the all-powerful megalomaniacs".

The agents of foreign propaganda in Macedonia were engaged in considerable activity in the field of cultural propaganda. The *Бугарска матица* (Bugaraska matitsa), whose underlying aim was to spread Bulgarian literature and culture and the Bulgarian language and to exert a stronger Bulgarian political influence among Macedonians, was established with funds provided by the Bulgarian Exarchate. The People's Federative Party and the Teachers' Organisation declared war on the activity of the *Bugaraska matitsa*.

The Gymnastic Societies *Юнак* (Hero) and *Сокол* (Falcon) were formed by the agents of Bulgarian and Serbian propaganda respectively. The Greek propaganda agents also set up similar institutions.

Macedonian journalism showed a marked prosperity during this period. On 8th August, 1908 *Конституциона зарја* (Constitutional dawn) the organ of the IMRO, appeared under the editorship of Dime Hadzhi Dimov and Dimitar Miraschiev. It began the most important tribune of the Macedonian revolutionary and progressive forces. On 27th September, 1908 the newspaper *Единство* (Unity) appeared, edited by Dimitar Vlahov. Later, on the formation of the PFP, both *Единство* (Unity) and *Конституциона зарја* (Constitutional dawn) ceased publication and in their place, as the organ of the PFP, the newspaper *Народна волја* (People's Will) appeared. It was edited first by Angel Tomov and later by Dimitar Vlahov.

In addition to the publication of these newspapers there were others published by the Macedonian socialist organisations. Vasil Glavinov's group issued *Работническа искра* (Workers' Spark) and the Skopje Socialist Organisation issued *Социалистичка зора* (Socialist Dawn). The papers *Светлина* (Light) and *Истина* (Truth) appeared for a brief period in Salonika in the first half of 1912 as the mouthpieces of the independent Macedonian citizenry.



During the period 1908-12 the propaganda machines of the neighbouring Balkan states developed a particularly intense activity in the field of publishing. Their aims were to obstruct the Macedonian people's independent development and to attack and discredit all that had the courage to stand against them. Yané Sandanski and all that he represented in the Macedonian national revolutionary movement were particularly liable to attack in this connection.

## *MACEDONIA DURING THE BALKAN WARS AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR (1912-18)*

### THE BALKAN WARS

#### Formation of the Balkan League and First Balkan War

The principal activity of the armed bands of the neighbouring states in Macedonia after the Ilinden Uprising sought either to impose complete mastery by one of the bands or to create a practical division into spheres of interest. This ran parallel with the efforts of their governments to agree on united action against the Ottoman Empire and on the division of the territories they might wrest from it. This policy was provoked by the growth of a national awareness among the Macedonian people and a tendency towards independence in the Balkans. A result of this policy was the signing in 1904 of an inter-state agreement between Serbia and Bulgaria which marked the start of a mutual rapprochement and a uniting of the Balkan states with a view to settling their accounts with the Ottoman Empire.

The development of political relations in the Balkans after the Young Turk Revolution, and more particularly the degradation of the Young Turk regime and the renewed sharpening of internal political and economic contradictions stimulated the Balkan states to speed up their consultations on united action against the Ottoman Empire.

The first contacts between Bulgaria and Serbia took place in October 1911, in fact when the Italo-Turkish War broke out. Fundamental disagreement arose in the initial discussions over the future of Macedonia. Bulgaria was in favour of taking the whole of Macedonia, or at least the larger part including Salonika, Bitola and Veles. Serbia, on the other hand, wanted a division which would provide her with an outlet to the Aegean Sea and so sought the Vardar valley for herself.

In view of the impossibility of making their aspirations towards Macedonia coincide, despite intensive discussions, with the

assistance of czarist Russia the two governments agreed to sign a treaty without stating precise territorial limits in Macedonia. The obvious intention was to settle these by force of arms. The treaty, accompanied by a secret annexe, was signed on 13th March 1912. The annexe envisaged the establishment of a joint authority of both countries in Macedonia after its liberation from the Ottoman state. The two countries undertook a three months' examination of the possibility of making Macedonia into an autonomous region. In the event of agreement proving impossible the assignees undertook to accept the arbitration of the Russian Czar. This arbitration was however to be limited by the terms of the treaty. Its only result could have been the partition of Macedonia along a line from Golem Vrv, north of Kriva Palanka, to Lake Ohrid.

Greece and Montenegro later became party to the Serbo-Bulgarian Treaty. Separate bilateral treaties which did not touch upon the territorial problem were signed with them.

The formation of the Balkan Anti-Ottoman League marked the start of intensive preparations for war, accompanied by an extensive propaganda campaign in the press and the organisation of provocations within the Ottoman Empire. The aim of these last was to convince international public opinion that the situation in Macedonia was such that nothing could improve it save the expulsion of the Ottoman Empire. The Balkan Social Democrats, including those in Macedonia, spoke out against the war.

The war broke out on 18th October 1912. The most important engagements took place on Macedonian territory, near Kumanovo and at Bakarno Gumno near Bitola, and on the Thracian front. In the course of a month and a half the Ottoman Empire was defeated and an armistice was signed on 4th December 1912. The greater part of the territory that had been ruled by the Ottomans was split up among the allies. The Serbian army had penetrated as far as Lerin (Florina) and Gevgeliya, thus occupying the majority of Vardar Macedonia and virtually the whole of Albania. For its part the Bulgarian army had occupied eastern Macedonia up to a line from Gorna Dzuhumaya, (Blagoevgrad) to Shtip, Gevgeliya, Kukush (Kiklids), Salonika and Kavalla and a large part of Thrace. The remainder of Macedonia, together with Lerin (Florina) was occupied by Greece whose army as well as that of Bulgaria had entered Salonika.

### *Macedonian Participation in the War against the Ottoman Empire*

The situation of the Macedonian people in the Ottoman Empire was such that the only way to their liberation was through the removal of Ottoman rule. They therefore looked hopefully to the allies' military action against the Ottoman Empire for their liberation from Ottoman bondage, but also feared for their future in view of the intentions of the neighbouring states. They contributed towards their own liberation according to their conditions and possibilities. Special units composed of Macedonians were formed in the armies of the Balkan states and Yané Sandanski's independent bands were also active. Thus forty-four bands were formed in Bulgaria on the outbreak of war. These were infiltrated into Macedonia to create diversions in the rear of the Ottoman army. In Macedonia itself thirty-four bands were active against the Ottoman authorities. Yané Sandanski's independent detachment, which consisted of about five hundred men, occupied a special place among them. A special military unit was also formed within the Bulgarian army and called the Macedonian Militia Force, which numbered about fourteen thousand.

The Serbian army also formed volunteer bands as part of the National Guard. The numerical size of these bands, about thirty in all, was not larger than three hundred. Later, in the course of the war, what was known as the Volunteer Regiment was formed composed of Macedonians, Turks and Albanians.

In the Greek army a similar band of Macedonians, known as the 'Holy Band', was formed.

The Macedonian units which were active in the rear of the Ottoman army were of great service to the allied armies. As well as carrying out diversions on roads and postal and telegraphic communications they delayed mobilisation, and took control of villages and, in places, towns, in which they established their own authorities, e.g. in the districts of Bansko, Nevrokop and Melnik, liberated by Yané Sandanski, and in other parts of Macedonia. Particular bravery was shown by the Macedonian volunteer unit which, under orders from the Bulgarian high command, was active on the Thracian front instead of in Macedonia.

Taking an active part in the war against the Ottoman Empire, the Macedonian people expected that their participation would be respected by the allies and that their aspirations towards freedom and independence would be realised. These expectations were publicly voiced by Yané Sandanski in Salonika when he declared himself in favour of an autonomous Macedonia. However, the allies' intentions towards the Ottoman Empire were quite otherwise.

Insatiable in their aspirations, each attempted to take as large a part of Macedonia as possible with the unconcealed intention of retaining control there regardless of the treaties signed. They therefore crudely put down every sign of or request for independence from the Macedonians.

*The St. Petersburg Macedonian Colony's Initiative for an Independent Macedonian State*

It was Macedonians outside Macedonia, the Macedonian colony in St. Petersburg, out of reach of the long arms of the new overlords of Macedonia, who raised their voices against the imposition of a new and even harsher authority in Macedonia and against the real danger of the partition of Macedonia among the three pretenders. In the winter of 1912/13 as soon as Ottoman rule had been thrown off, Dimitriya Chupovski came to Macedonia as a representative of this group. Together with other distinguished Macedonian revolutionaries, such as Petar Pop Arsov, he gave the initiative for resistance to the seizing of Macedonia and its partition. He demanded that the Macedonian people's contribution should be seen as that of an ally and that their desire for an independent state should be respected. This initiative spread rapidly to several centres in Macedonia. Attempts were made to elect a delegation which was to be sent to the Peace Conference in London to fight for a free Macedonian state within its ethnographic and geographical frontiers. At the same time the necessity of developing extensive propaganda action to support these requests both in Macedonia itself and abroad was recognised.

Immediately these attempts of Chupovski's assumed a wider scope, they were cut short and he was exiled. Thus the entire action was wiped out.

Chupovski returned to Russia. There, in the newspaper *Македонски глас* (Macedonian Voice), he commenced battle against the intentions of the Balkan pretenders to Macedonia. Through these declarations he sought the support of the Russian people. In addition, on 14th March 1913, the Macedonian colony in St. Petersburg sent a memorandum to the London Peace Conference. This was in the form of a request that the Conference prevent the partition of Macedonia which would then become an independent Balkan state whose internal organisation would be left to the Macedonian People's Assembly, to be elected and summoned in Salonika as soon as possible. The group also mounted intensive activity in the Russian capital itself. Its representatives, Chupovski and Dimov, took part in discussions organised by the 'Association for Slav Scholarly Unification' on 15th and 16th May in St. Petersburg

and attended by A. Belich from Serbia and I. Shishmanov from Bulgaria. Chupovski and Dimov laid before the meeting the same demands as those that had been set forth in the memorandum.

Immediately prior to the outbreak of the intra-league war, on 20th June 1913, the Macedonian colony in St. Petersburg tabled a second memorandum which was sent this time to the allied Balkan states. In it they demanded even more insistently the formation of a free Macedonian state which would be accepted as an equal member of the Balkan League. They also sought the re-establishment of the autocephalous Ohrid Church. The document gravely indicated the catastrophic consequences which would ensue for the Macedonian people, for future relations among the peoples of the Balkans and for peace if Macedonia were to be partitioned.

*Second Balkan War*

The signing in London of a peace with the Ottoman Empire had not solved the problems which had caused the First Balkan War. It was not merely that the contradictions surrounding the government of the conquered territories and especially of Macedonia had not been resolved: on Serbia's withdrawal from Albania, under pressure from Austria-Hungary, they had become aggravated. The League Member-countries had no intention of acting in accordance with the clauses of the allied treaty or of being satisfied with the territory which they had gained. Their attempts were moving in the direction of expansion at the expense of their partners. Thus preparations began for an armed settling of accounts. Serbia and Greece concluded a secret treaty on joint activity against Bulgaria which would entail their seizing those Macedonian territories then held by Bulgaria. Bulgaria found herself hard pressed by Austria-Hungary from whom she anticipated assistance and so carried out hasty preparations for war with her hitherto allies over the conquest of the whole of Macedonia. On 29th June 1913 she ordered her army to mount a general attack upon the Serbian and Greek armies. There followed a period of brief but exceptionally fierce fighting. All that had been mounting up in the years-long propagandist competition in Macedonia found expression in unbelievable blood-thirstiness. As the fighting took place on Macedonian soil the consequences fell exclusively on the Macedonian people. More than a dozen inhabited areas and towns, particularly in the Aegean part of Macedonia, were plundered and razed. Many of these would never rise again. This resulted in an enormous wave of refugees who, in the face of the danger of massacre, abandoned everything in order to save their very lives.

The war was soon over. Hard-pressed by both Serbian and Greek armies which had been joined by the armies of Rumania and the Ottoman Empire, the Bulgarian government sought peace.

The peace conference of the five victorious powers – Serbia, Montenegro, Greece, the Ottoman Empire and Rumania – and defeated Bulgaria was held in Bucharest from 28th July to 10th August 1913. In the name of the “creation of a just balance”, which in fact took no account of the national, economic, political or any other rights of the peoples of the territories through which the new Balkan frontiers were drawn, the victors dictated those peace terms which best satisfied their own interests. The Peace of Bucharest had disastrous consequences for Macedonia, which was parcelled out among the three pretenders Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria. In addition to this certain territorial corrections were carried out vis-a-vis Bulgaria in Thrace and in Dobruja. The Treaty of Bucharest shattered the geopolitical, ethnic and economic unity of the Macedonian people. The Macedonian economy and also the national liberation movement suffered catastrophic blows. The latter was now forced to exist in extremely inauspicious conditions. The forces in the occupied parts of Macedonia implemented a complete military regime. Every sign of activity aimed at the achievement of Macedonian independence was crushed mercilessly and a crude policy of systematic de-nationalising and assimilation of the Macedonian people began in the occupied territories.

## MACEDONIA IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR

### *The First Years of the War*

The outbreak of the First World War in Europe (1914-1918) between the two imperialist blocs – the Central Powers, with Germany and Austria-Hungary at their head, and the powers of the Entente, led by France, Russia and Britain – rendered the Macedonian question current once more. In their efforts to attract as many states as possible to their own camps the two blocs concentrated their attention, in the Balkans, on Bulgaria. Since the possession of Macedonia was the chief stumbling block in the relations among the Balkan states this question came to the forefront in the various diplomatic combinations.

The Central Alliance powers, which in large measure had accelerated the re-alignment of the Balkan allies in the Second Balkan War, offered the whole of Macedonia and parts of Serbia to Bulgaria in order to attract her into the Alliance. For their part the

members of the Entente, regardless of the strained relations between Serbia and Bulgaria after the Treaty of Bucharest, operated similarly over the Macedonian question. At one stage they too offered Bulgaria the whole of Macedonia simply in order to win her over to their camp.

During the attempts of the two antagonistic camps to outbid each other over Macedonia in 1914/15 Bulgaria maintained a pretence of neutrality but in fact was in close contact with the Central Powers and placed the Supremacist bands at their disposal for the exertion of pressure and creation of diversions in Serbia. In this context the attack carried out by these bands on 2nd April 1915 near Udovo and Valandovo was particularly grave. The aim of the attack was to sever the railway link between Skopje and Salonika. In the autumn of 1915 Bulgaria eventually abandoned her sham neutrality and entered the war on the side of the Central Powers. The Bulgarian army took advantage of the Serbian army's engagement on the Austro-Hungarian front and rapidly seized that part of Macedonia which since the Treaty of Bucharest had been administered by Serbia and reached the Graeco-Serbian frontier. This frontier, with insignificant exceptions in the direction of Lerin (Florina) and Bitola, became the front line between the two warring blocs in the Balkans and remained so until the autumn of 1918. The Entente forces which with the course of time reached a total of six hundred thousand men were concentrated to the south of this Salonika or Macedonian Front while to the north were the Central Alliance forces whose numbers were likewise six hundred thousand. Thus in the course of the three years of this war Macedonia became an arena for the destruction of the national wealth of the Macedonian people.

### *Macedonia's Situation under the Rule of her Conquerors*

With the stabilisation of the Salonika Front Macedonia was occupied and became a battleground for the two warring blocs. That part of the country which lay to the north of the front line was held by the Central Powers and its occupation administered by the Bulgarian state. The part lying to the south of the front was nominally under Greek authority but in fact was ruled by those whose units were stationed there. This was a source of frequent conflict, especially between the Serbian and Greek authorities. The given situation at certain periods in the war was looked upon as, effectively, an expansion of the Serbian territories southwards towards Salonika.

The situation of the Macedonian people was in both parts the same. The Bulgarian occupying authorities attempted through their administration of the 'Macedonian Military Inspection District' to create the impression that they were treating Macedonia on an equal footing with Bulgaria. But this was a transparent tactic since the Macedonian people and their economy were subjected to very harsh exploitation. There was a general mobilisation and Macedonians were either used as gun-fodder at the front or else on the construction of military objects under extremely wretched conditions in the rear. For these reasons and on account of the imposition of martial law dissatisfaction was continually on the increase in the country. This dissatisfaction developed first into passive resistance in the form of avoidance of the obligations of mobilisation and requisitions and later into active opposition through escape into outlawry and the use of arms against the occupier. The growth of such opposition was particularly marked after the October Revolution. It also appeared among the ranks of the soldiers and mutinies flared up against the army.

In the area that was under the Entente forces the Macedonian people were subject to a similar or even harsher exploitation. Here they had to bear both the rule of the Greek administration and that of the allied forces. It was particularly difficult in those areas where there was rivalry between Greek and Serbian authorities and where the bands of the Serbian leader Babunski were active.

In addition to the conditions of war in which the Macedonian people on both sides of the front line found themselves and in addition to the intolerable exploitation of their material and human resources, Macedonian settlements were exposed to daily destruction. Whoever of the adversaries attacked and bombarded it was the Macedonian people who bore the consequences. Towns such as Doyran, Bitola, Voden (Edessa), Lerin (Florina), Enidzhé Vardar, Gumendzhé and Kostur (Castoria) were daily targets for guns and for aircraft too. Many villages between Lerin (Florina) and Bitola which were the objects of continual bombardment in the course of these three years were razed from the face of the earth.

#### *The Macedonian Question in the Course of the War*

Bulgaria's entry into the war on the side of the Central Powers forced the Macedonian question into the background for the time being. The question remained, however, and depending upon

the political relations and the development of the war engaged the attention of the warring powers and especially of the Entente.

In the course of 1915-16 France made use of the presence of her army in the southern part of Macedonia and of the fact she was in command of the 'Eastern Army' to consider the possibility of the organisation of Macedonia into an autonomous unit and even took certain practical steps towards it. This unit was to serve France as a base for economic expansion in the Balkans after the war. After the outbreak of the February and October Revolutions and Russia's consequent withdrawal from the war the problem of Macedonia once more occupied the foreground. France and Britain, the major powers of the Entente, conceived the idea of signing a separate peace treaty with Bulgaria. They hoped thus to remove her from the Central Alliance. To this end, therefore, they began once again to form various combinations at Macedonia's expense. In contrast to the treatment of the problem in 1915 when the price of attracting Bulgaria to join the Entente had been the offer of the whole of Vardar Macedonia, now two alternatives were explored as a reward for signing a special peace treaty: one, put forward at the outset of the discussions, was to grant Bulgaria that part of Vardar Macedonia to the east of the River Vardar while the other, considered particularly in the first half of 1918, was that Macedonia should be set up as an autonomous Balkan state under the protection of one of the great powers. With this in view a large-scale referendum the purpose of which was to examine the geographical, economic, ethnic, religious and other characteristics of Macedonia was carried out in the spring of 1918 in the south of Macedonia.

This attitude towards Macedonia's future on the part of the great powers of the Entente aroused a sharp reaction from the Serbian and Greek governments. They were in no circumstances prepared to relinquish what they had gained from the Treaty of Bucharest. On the contrary they were in favour of fresh territorial expansion.

The Serbian government attempted to prevent any discussion or combination concerning Macedonia, and especially concerning those parts of Macedonia that it considered its own, but it was not possible to eliminate the Macedonian question from the international discussions on the future of Europe: indeed it was forced upon the Serbian government itself when it dealt with the problems involved in the unification of the Yugoslav peoples and the organisational structure of a unified state. The question had been first raised in June 1917 at the Corfu Conference when discussions were held with representatives of the Yugoslav Committee on the Unification of the Yugoslav Peoples. In July 1918 it was brought up again in Voden (Edessa) when, with the help of certain Serbian

superior officers, a declaration was issued seeking that the Corfu Declaration should be made to incorporate Macedonia and that the Yugoslav Committee in London should be expanded to include Macedonian delegates. This second Declaration stated that the Macedonians as a Yugoslav tribe identified themselves with all the Yugoslav aspirations and declared their support for unification with all Yugoslavs on the basis of a democratic organisation of the future community.

#### *Attitude of Macedonian Emigrants towards the War*

After the Treaty of Bucharest the Macedonian people were divided among their neighbours into three parts and subjected to military regimes. Such conditions afforded them no possibility whatsoever of expressing in an organised manner either their attitude towards the war or their aspirations. Physically suppressed, they were also politically strangled by their oppressors.

Despite this state of affairs the world was nevertheless made acquainted with the Macedonian people's fundamental aspiration: the establishment of Macedonia's territorial integrity. This demand was put forward by Macedonian emigrants, particularly by those in Russia and in Switzerland. Far from the reach of their country's occupiers they were able to express their people's aspirations more freely and to campaign for their realisation.

Immediately upon the outbreak of the war Krsté P. Misirkov, at the Pan-Slavonic Assembly in Odessa on 6th August 1914, requested that a manifesto be drawn up for the unification of the whole of Macedonia into a single state. This request was made in the name of the Macedonian people's contribution to the resistance to the German alliance. Arguing from the results of the Macedonian people's revolutionary struggles, the Macedonian emigrants called upon Russia, Britain and France to become involved in the liberation of Macedonia. They saw in the autonomy of Macedonia the only solution for all those who were interested in the Balkans and in peace in Europe.

The activity of the Macedonian emigrants in Russia was given support by the Council of the Society for Slavonic Reciprocity whose members included eminent Russian public figures. At its session on 8th June 1915 this organisation passed a Resolution on the Macedonian Question which totally supported the Macedonian emigrants' demands for the establishment of the integrity of Macedonia and its organisation as an independent state.

Macedonian emigrants in Switzerland were particularly active towards the end of the war. There, under the leadership of the

physician and Privatdocent Dr. Kotsarev of Geneva, a Macedonian Society for an Independent Macedonia was formed in 1918. It aimed to establish the idea of an independent Macedonia and directed its appeal towards Macedonians living in Switzerland, unequivocally affirming that Macedonia belonged not to the Bulgarians, or Serbs, or Greeks but to the Macedonians alone. "Macedonia for the Macedonians" was the watchword with which they appeared before their immediate public and the world.

Under the conditions of the First World War the Macedonian people remained constant to the fundamental aim of the Macedonian national movement: the autonomy of Macedonia.

#### *Unification of the Yugoslav Peoples and the Macedonian National Problem*

The end of the war saw the creation of the new Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. This monarchical community was in no respect a reflection of the democratic aspirations of the Yugoslav peoples and left their national and social aspirations unrealised. It failed to provide any solution to the Macedonian national question, which indeed imposed itself with even greater force within the new state framework. At the end of the war the Macedonian people were left subjugated and split into three parts. Under these conditions the establishment of Macedonia's integrity remained their underlying aim and so no small hopes were invested in the Paris Peace Conference. For this reason the alternative of a new state instead of partition was not greeted with any great enthusiasm, particularly as the Serbian bourgeoisie reactivated the 1913 regime of special decrees in Macedonia. The most important matter for the Macedonian people was still that Macedonia's territorial unity should be established and that Macedonia should be constituted as an autonomous state.

These aspirations served as the foundation stone for the activity of Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria and in other European countries, most notably in Switzerland. The action of the emigrant circles in the Serres Revolutionary District was in this respect particularly outstanding. They at one time led the left wing. In October 1918, in an endeavour to unify the left wing among the emigrants, they issued a Declaration on the Solution of the Macedonian Question. This was based on the re-establishment of the integral area of Macedonia and its being built up into an autonomous state. The unification of all the progressive emigrant currents in Bulgaria was brought about by this activity on the part of the left wing. On 9th March 1919 they issued a joint appeal in which de-



mands for a united, independent Macedonia with firm international frontiers and permanent neutrality were once more affirmed. In addition a Temporary Mission, the organised embodiment of the united emigrants, was active at the Paris Peace Conference in the person of the regional representatives, Paul Hristov; and this Mission sought from the Conference recognition of the Macedonian people's rights and aspirations to independence.

Outside Bulgaria too the emigrants directed their activity towards ensuring Macedonia's integrity and autonomy. The rôle of the emigrants in Switzerland was in this respect outstanding. Their numerous societies amalgamated to form a General Council in Geneva. Making use of the conditions under which it operated the General Council was active in both Europe and America where it popularised the justified demands of the Macedonian people, endeavouring to gain international public support before the Peace Conference. The General Council reacted sharply to the attempts of Bulgarian diplomats to appear in the name of Macedonia. At one point it requested of the Peace Conference that Macedonia should be organised as an autonomous unit and subsequently be joined to Yugoslavia.

#### *The Macedonian Question at the Paris Peace Conference*

The re-opening of the question of Macedonia's future at the end of the war indicated more than did anything else that this would be one of the many problems which would occupy the attention of the forthcoming Peace Conference. The numerous reasons for this arose from the interests of the various pretenders and also from the widespread international activity of Macedonian emigrants who could under no circumstances be reconciled to the state to which Macedonia had been reduced.

The discussions on Macedonia at the Peace Conference began officially when the problems of peace in the Balkans appeared on its agenda. The question was first discussed by the Committee on the Formation of New States on 10th June 1919. At this session the Italian delegation, motivated by its own interests, declared itself in favour of the implementation of a special administration in Macedonia. Subsequently, at the thirty-third sitting of the Committee, it put forward a plan to grant autonomy to Macedonia within the framework of Yugoslavia. The plan envisaged that the part of Macedonia which fell within Yugoslavia should have its own autonomous parliament with the right to legislative powers in the spheres of language, education, religion, local administration and all other questions on which it would be granted authority according

to the laws of Yugoslavia. This proposal was followed by keen discussion. The French delegation adopted a sharply opposed position. The British delegation proffered the compromise proposal that the League of Nations should send representatives to Macedonia who by their presence would strengthen the guarantees against subjugation or that a League of Nations Commissary be established in Macedonia for a five-year period. These attempts, failed, however, because of France's negative attitude.

The Macedonian problem was further examined at the Conference in connection with Clause 51 of the Peace Treaty with Austria at the Convention on the Protection of Minority Rights. According to Clause 9 of the Conference, Yugoslavia and Greece were bound to grant minority rights to the territories they had incorporated after 1st January 1913. The Yugoslav government used all the resources at its disposal to frustrate this proposal on the protection of minorities which would apply to Macedonia. The delegation left Paris and a governmental crisis ensued. These moves did not, however, help the Yugoslav government and it accepted the controversial Clause 51 of the Peace Treaty with Austria and the Convention on Minority Rights. This finally sealed the fate of Macedonia, which remained split among the three rival Balkan states. The Paris Peace Conference had simply sanctioned the decrees of the 1913 Bucharest Peace Treaty. The one alteration which was made was the incorporation of Strumitsa and its surroundings, with a total population of some sixty thousand, into Yugoslavia.

In spite of the difficult consequences of the Balkan and First World Wars for the Macedonian people it should be stated that these wars served to link the Macedonian national question to the problem of the unification of the Yugoslav peoples within a constitutional unit on a democratic basis. The best testimonials to this were the discussions at the Corfu Conference of 1917 on the unification of the Yugoslav Peoples and the Voden (Édessa) Declaration of 1918 made despite the efforts of Serbian ruling circles to treat the Macedonian national question as a Serbian territorial problem and a domestic matter. The formation of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes did initiate a natural process linking the Macedonian national struggle to that of the working class and other democratic forces among the Yugoslav peoples, the struggle to create a united state in which national and social subjugation would be eliminated.

## MACEDONIA BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

### MACEDONIA IN THE KINGDOM OF SERBS, CROATS AND SLOVENES UP TO THE ST. VITUS' DAY CONSTITUTION

#### *Changes and New Conditions in Macedonia*

The First World War led to a redrawing of the map of Europe and to a new, artificial partition of Macedonia among the three Balkan states of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, or Yugoslavia; Bulgaria and Greece. The southern coastal regions together with Salonika were allotted to Greece, the eastern areas to Bulgaria and northern and central Macedonia round the Vardar valley came within the borders of the newly formed Yugoslav state. The geographical extent of Macedonia within the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was 25,713 sq. kms. i.e. approximately a tenth of the total territory of Yugoslavia at that time. The wars in and around Macedonia during the second decade of the twentieth century and the incorporation of parts of it into the respective Balkan states had caused Macedonia enormous material and human losses. The material losses represented a significant part of Macedonia's natural wealth. A large number of the population had suffered during the wars or later left the country in search of employment or to escape subjugation and terrorism.

The vast devastations of the wars intensified the country's economic decline. The towns of Doyran, Bitola and Strumitsa and numerous villages were either totally destroyed or greatly damaged. Extensive tracts of land were left unworked because of unresolved ownership disputes or because of requisitions of human and animal foodstuffs and the agricultural inventory was noticeably reduced. That particularly important branch of the Macedonian economy, animal husbandry, suffered considerable losses both from the necessity of feeding the armies and the population and from

the impossibility of transferring the herds during the winter months from the mountains to the warm plains and the southern coastal regions.

The damaged railway links and bridges and the severing or deterioration of the lines of communication in general rendered the country's economic state even more acute. The lack of various foodstuffs afforded speculators and corrupt government officials an opportunity to make quick and easy gains while, on the other hand, high prices and unemployment endangered the livelihood of the working population.

The majority of the Macedonian working population and above all the peasants had hoped that end of the First World War would bring an improvement in their socio-economic situation and advance the cause of their national freedom. The peasants were especially interested in a solution to the agrarian question. The ruling class, however, rejected any radical answer which would have helped the impoverished peasants and the landless. It sought to safeguard the interests of the large estate owners and to ensure through purchase that they did not suffer; thus it resorted to half-measures and compromises.

The implementation of agrarian reform in Macedonia was involved with colonisation. Estate and state land was given to immigrants from other parts of Yugoslavia while the local population suffered from a lack of land.

The 'Regulation for the Settlement of the New Southern Regions' of 24th September 1920 excluded Macedonians from the possibility of obtaining land outside the area of their homesteads. Through colonisation the administrators of the time sought to establish oases and cordons which would break up the national compactness of the Macedonian population. The colonists were to serve both as bases for the reactionary regime and as bridgeheads for a swift and efficacious denationalisation and assimilation of the Macedonian people.

The policy of national subjugation pursued by the monarchy and the ruling bourgeoisie was expressed in the very harsh sanctions against the use of the Macedonian language and the printing of books or other publications in that language. In the newly formed Yugoslav Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes the Macedonians were barred from free and active participation in public political life. They were not permitted to protect their national and political rights and interests through an independent Macedonian political party.

As long as the commanding positions in the government of Macedonia were held by faithful servants of the ruling bourgeoisie and of the court the Macedonian people were in no way represented either in the government or in the 'Temporary People's Assem-

bly'. This very harsh trampling on the will and the interests of the Macedonian people was one proof more of the undemocratic nature of the Yugoslav state.

### *Revival of Political Activity in Macedonia*

The Serbian bourgeois parties, the Radicals and the Democrats immediately entered the political life of Macedonia. They had no links with the masses and sought and found their support among corrupt and careerist elements in Macedonia.

At the time of the signing of the peace treaty between the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes and Bulgaria, on 27th November 1919, armed bands began to infiltrate Macedonia from Bulgaria. On the pretext that they were fighting for an autonomous Macedonia they sowed death and terrorism throughout the land. These bands were organised by Todor Aleksandrov and financed by the Sofia administration. It was hoped thereby to attract the attention of European diplomacy to the Macedonian question and to obtain a revision of the terms of the peace treaty as it affected the Balkans. This, it was hoped, would mean a further partition and annexation of Macedonia. Albanian outlaws roamed throughout western Macedonia, pillaging, kidnapping, blackmailing and perpetrating other acts of violence. Their actions had the support of the Tirana government and were secretly backed by certain Serbian chiefs-of-staff and military commanders in Macedonia.

Influenced by the October Socialist Revolution, socialist organisations began to reappear in Macedonia. This was just one facet of the resurgence and linking of the class movement of all the Yugoslav peoples and nationalities which was taking place in the situation of bad domestic politics and fundamental contradictions that were becoming ever more acute. Among the earliest party organisations to reappear in Macedonia after the First World War were those in Skopje, Veles and Bitola. The Skopje organisation was re-founded on 9th February 1919, under the leadership of Dushan Tsekich, Iliya Plavev, Stoyan Divlev, Lazar Malezanov and Pera Yovanovich. It at once entered upon a programme of intensified action and propaganda. Twenty delegates from Macedonian socialist organisations, including Dushan Tsekich, Dragan Tasich and Petar Georgiev, took an active part in the Unification Congress in Belgrade, held from 20th to 23rd April 1919. It was at this congress that the Socialist Party of Yugoslavia (Communist) was formed. Dushan Tsekich was elected to the party's central leadership.

After the Unification Congress party organisations spread throughout Macedonia. Their activity in the course of 1919 inclu-

ded the following aims: organisational strengthening, attracting new members and supporters, holding meetings and May Day celebrations and preparing and raising the masses in the struggles for demobilisation, for the prevention of counter-revolutionary intervention (in Hungary) and against speculation, unemployment, the use of violence and the plunder of the working people. The Bitola organisation was particularly active on a large scale over and above the strikes and tariff battles that were carried on.

In their implementation of party policy and directives the Macedonian communists invested considerable effort in the founding of trades unions, the extension of workers' health and social security, the carrying out of a radical agrarian reform, the realisation of national equality and democracy in the country, and also in the popularisation and defence of the Russian and Hungarian Soviet Republics. Strikes and demonstrations were organised in July 1919 in Skopje and elsewhere. In the autumn the Second Anniversary of the October Socialist Revolution was honoured with stoppages of work and with public celebrations.

A District Party conference, attended by thirty-four delegates from twelve party and nine trades union organisations, was held in Skopje on 7th and 8th January 1920. Its aim was to intensify party propaganda and other activity. The Conference elected a Regional Party Secretariat for Macedonia and Old Serbia with its seat in Skopje and identified precisely the party's standpoint and strategy vis-a-vis the forthcoming local administration elections.

The reappearance of the party newspaper 'Socialist Dawn' contributed considerably to the spreading of communist propaganda among the working classes of Vardar Macedonia and South Serbia. The number of organised supporters both of the party and of the trades unions increased rapidly, reaching a total of eight thousand in the spring of 1920. The participation of some two thousand Macedonian railwaymen and transport and communications workers in the general strike of Yugoslav railwaymen was particularly important among the actions undertaken by party and trades union organisations.

Macedonian party organisations sent delegates to the Second Party Congress which was held in Vukovar from 20th to 24th June 1920. The Congress consistently adopted a position of support for the growth of the working class movement based on the class struggle; for the abolition of the capitalist system and for the reorganisation of Yugoslavia as a soviet republic.

### *1920 Local Elections in Macedonia*

After the formation of the Vesnich government the state apparatus was to a large extent put at the service of the Radical Party. Contrary to legal injunctions, state officials, judges, teachers and other functionaries in Macedonia agitated for enlistment in the party and employed means ranging from demagogic promises and bribes to falsification of the voting papers and open intimidation. The despatch to 'military exercises' of the majority of the progressive young people and those inclined to revolution excluded them from voting in the elections. The Radical Party reached an agreement with the leaders of the Moslem organisation Cemiyet on joint actions at the local elections. On 9th August 1920, immediately prior to the elections the Cemiyet had been set up by the regime as a politico-religious organisation under the leadership of reactionary beys and landowners. Its purpose was to fan the flames of religious and national intolerance and thus divide the working masses of Turkish nationality from those of the Yugoslav peoples.

In addition to the Radicals (together with the Cemiyet) and the Democrats the other significant public groupings which came forward with their own candidates at the local elections in Macedonia were the Communist and Craftsmen. In certain towns – Skopje and Kavadarci among them – the Democrats gained support from left – over supporters of the Exarchate and from the small number of Protogerov's followers. The tendency of the Communist Party was to put up lists of candidates only in the urban districts, while in the villages it put up single candidates.

In the local elections of 22nd August in Bitola, Skopje and Gostivar the Radical Party's candidates, supported by the Cemiyet and other reactionary elements, were declared the elected representatives and thus gained control of the local administrations. The Democrats gained the districts of Shtip, Kratovo, Tetovo, Negotino and Gevgeliya while the Communist Party gained the victory in the local administrations of Veles, Kumanovo, Kavadarci and certain villages. The Party's victory in Veles, where it secured 1,285 votes to the Democrats' 582 and the Radicals' 66, was particularly convincing. In Kumanovo the Communist Party candidates secured 720 of the votes cast, the Democrats 500 and the Radicals 280.

As a result of energetic protests, the State Council was compelled to annul the elections in Skopje and in Tetovo and to announce new elections. At the second election in Skopje the Communists gained 1,617 votes, the combined Radicals, Cemiyet and Craftsmen 1,180 and the Democrats 391. Thus the local administration of the principal town of Macedonia passed into the hands of the Communists.

During the brief period of their existence the Communist administrations in Skopje, Veles, Kumanovo and Kavadarci invested great effort towards the safeguarding and improvement of the living conditions of the working population. This intensive activity in the service of the people on the part of the Communist administrations in Macedonia lasted only for a few months and was cut short by the passing of the notorious Edict (Obznana).

*Constituent Assembly Elections,  
the Edict and the St.  
Vitus' Day Constitution*

At the Constituent Assembly elections in Vardar Macedonia the Radical, Democratic, Communist and Republican Parties, the Moslem organisation Cemiyet and the Moslem Democratic League all put up candidates. The Radical Party and the Moslem Democratic League hypocritically announced that they were in agreement with the granting of autonomy to Macedonia. Their stance with regard to Macedonian emigrant circles was to favour the return of Macedonians from Bulgaria and they advocated the appointment to the government service of returned intellectuals. They also adopted a position of toleration towards the public use of the 'local dialect'.

During the election campaign the widespread terrorism of the state political apparatus was accompanied by falsification and corruption in various forms. From a total of 150,000 electors the votes cast in the Constituent Assembly elections were divided among the parties as follows: Communist Party of Yugoslavia 40,201; Democratic Party 30,379; Radical Party 10,702, the Cemiyet 18,528 and the Republican Party and Moslem Democratic League together c. 6,000. On the basis of the results of the voting and according to the existing electoral system representative mandates were allotted in Macedonia to the following parties: Communist Party of Yugoslavia 15; Democratic Party 11; Cemiyet 5 and the Radical Party 2. Thus more than two-fifths (38 per cent) of all the votes in Macedonia had been given to Communist Party of Yugoslavia candidates and the Party had secured the largest number of mandates. This meant a great victory for the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in Macedonia.

The revolutionary upsurge of the workers had shaken and seriously threatened the foundations of the regime and the existing system. Faced with the imminent outbreak of a general strike and above all desirous of dealing a mortal blow to the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, during the night of 29th to 30th December 1920 the authorities hastily outlawed the Yugoslav Communist Party, clo-

sed down Communist and Trades Union Centres and organisations, banned their publications, confiscated their records and finances and tabled drastic sentences for those engaged in Communist propaganda or organisation.

The consequence of the Edict (Obznana) were extremely grave for Macedonia. The outlawing of the Party meant the removal of the principal, and the one and only organised, socio-political force which was rooted in the masses and expressed their interests and demands. Once the Belgrade administration had, by the Edict, succeeded in temporarily quashing their most dangerous adversary and the most revolutionary public force in the country, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, in the first half of 1921 they became completely involved in preparing for the adoption of a reactionary state constitution. Aided by the bought votes of the Yugoslav Moslem Organisation and the Cemiyet, they adopted the first Yugoslav State Constitution on 28th June (St. Vitus' Day) 1921. From the date of its adoption by the Constituent Assembly the Constitution came to be known as the St. Vitus' Day Constitution.

The St. Vitus' Day Constitution sanctioned the capitalist socio-economic system, the monarchy and centralised government of the state.

Before the adoption of the St. Vitus' Day Constitution proposals and petitions for the granting of regional self-government to Macedonia had been made. This was the disposition not merely of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia functionaries but also of various bourgeois Macedonian, Serbian, Croatian and other politicians. In some cases it was no more than a demagogic manoeuvre designed to gain Macedonian votes in the elections but there were also bourgeois politicians who sincerely favoured Macedonian autonomy. Immediately prior to the adoption of the St. Vitus' Day Constitution Marko Tsemovich's petition for the formation of a regional government in Macedonia, i.e. that Macedonia should become an autonomous region within the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, had gained extensive publicity. The Radicals and other supporters of a centralised state system did not, however, want to hear of any such plans. A new administrative division of the state territory into thirty-three districts was made on the basis of the St. Vitus' Day Constitution. This effectively broke up the economic and political compactness of the Yugoslav lands and peoples. Three such administrative districts were formed in Macedonia – Skopje, Bitola and Bregalnitsa Zhupaniya with their headquarters in Skopje, Bitola and Shtip respectively.

## ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT IN VARDAR MACEDONIA UP TO THE 6TH OF JANUARY DICTATORSHIP

### *Changes in the Rural and Urban Economies of Vardar Macedonia*

Within Yugoslavia the economy of Vardar Macedonia was faced with a great number of difficulties. These resulted from the low level of productive forces in Macedonia and the weak competitive ability of both rural and urban economy. The economically more advanced north-western lands and regions of Yugoslavia with their industry and more modern agriculture effectively squeezed the Macedonian economy's products out of the Yugoslav market.

The lack of land made the position of the peasantry of Vardar Macedonia particularly grave during this period. The implementation of agrarian reform was postponed by means of various laws, resolutions, directives and other state measures. This situation was closely linked to and conditioned by colonisation, the underlying aim of which was the denationalisation and assimilation of the Macedonian people.

'Nationally meritorious' and 'proved element' in the form of army volunteers from the Salonika Front, members of bands, military police, frontier guards, financial officials and refugees settled in Macedonia and were granted land.

The colonisation of Macedonia was particularly intensive during the first four or five years. To ensure the maximum possible settlement by colonists the Serbian bourgeois parties and the state government issued the most attractive promises and lures, representing Macedonia as an 'agricultural Eldorado' with measureless vacant tracts of extremely fertile land. Colonisation took place along the valley of the River Vardar and in the other plains of Macedonia and, with a set purpose, special efforts were made to colonise the frontier belt with Bulgaria. Because of the general backwardness of the Macedonian countryside and the predominance of small-holdings (several tens of thousands of peasant homesteads owned less than two hectares of land) there was in fact no surplus of land but rather a lack of it. The greater part (52.44 per cent) of the land fund for the implementation of agrarian reform was awarded to colonists from the police and the hands instead of being distributed to the Macedonian peasants.

Agrarian overpopulation and the inability of the economy to absorb the surplus labour force in the countryside caused large

numbers of the population to emigrate from Macedonia for economic reasons.

The total workable area of Vardar Macedonia in 1921 was estimated to be 335,712 hectares. Of this 250,000 hectares, that is to say 80.38 per cent of the total workable land, were sown with grain crops. Wheat, maize and barley were crops most extensively grown but because of the primitive operational methods the yield was among the lowest in Europe.

After the war an emphasis was put on the production of tobacco, cotton and other industrial cultures. In 1921 industrial cultures covered 8,900 hectares, in 1924 13,600 hectares and in 1929 15,500 hectares. Tobacco took the first place among the industrial crops. In 1924 as a result of the rise in prices tobacco production was twice what it had been in 1921.

In certain years (1925-28) opium poppies ranked first in the amount of land devoted to their production. This reached the level of 46.3 per cent of the total area of Vardar Macedonia given over to industrial crops.

During the first decade of the existence of Yugoslavia the production of cotton remained on the whole stagnant. The reason for this was that after the imposition of the new state boundaries the textile industry in Aegean Macedonia ceased to use raw materials from the Vardar region and the northern areas of Macedonia.

Other industrial crops in Macedonia such as sesame, sunflowers, flax, hemp and rape were of less significance. The most important vegetable cultures were beans and potatoes while only some 4,689 hectares were sown with fodder crops, among which vetch was the most common. Fruit-growing was on the increase in the well-known producing regions of Prespa, Polog and Malesheviya. Viniculture experienced a sharp decline in Macedonia after the First War. This was largely the result of phylloxera. Indigenous vines declined rapidly while on the contrary those of American origin flourished.

At this time there were two characteristic features in Macedonian agriculture: strong elements and forms of natural husbandry and massive technical backwardness. Wooden ploughs remained the basic implements and only a few of the larger landowners possessed up-to-date agricultural machinery.

Macedonia's incorporation into the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes gave its economy the direction of capitalist development and necessitated adaptation. After the war there had been only sixteen industrial organisations left in Vardar Macedonia. Because of lack of capital, economic discrimination and the political neglect of the Macedonian bourgeoisie local merchants were not in a position to invest the large sums needed to float industrial firms. In 1925 out of a total of twenty-seven firms eleven



belonged to the state and of the remaining sixteen seven were the property of Serbian or Czech capitalists. In the succeeding five years twenty-five new organisations were started of which more than two-thirds were small power stations or food processing plants. The majority of these had been set up with the participation of local capital which was a sign of the Macedonian capitalists' greater interest and ability to invest in industry.

Up to the outbreak of the great world crisis industry in Macedonia continued to expand slowly. Inadequately developed communications obstructed the provision of firms with raw materials from the more remote parts of Macedonia. In the period 1918-29 the Macedonian railway network was extended only by the 85.3 kilometres long Veles-Shtip-Kochani spur constructed in 1926.

In order to invigorate and finance production, commerce and communications banks and savings banks began to open in Vardar Macedonia. In addition to the branches of Serbian banks which already existed in Skopje and Bitola, in 1920 the Vardar Commercial and Industrial Bank opened in Skopje and the Bregalnitsa Bank in Shtip.

Conditions favourable to the expansion of various types of banking business made possible the founding of several other banks in Vardar Macedonia in the course of 1922. The shareholders in the private banks were in large part Serbian merchants or industrialists. The majority of the local banks owned only a very modest capital.

In the years following the First World War craftsmanship continued to decline. Craft economy was largely concentrated in the towns whose population in 1921 comprised 27.2 per cent of the total population of Macedonia within the Yugoslav state. Craft production techniques remained primitive and unaltered as the lack of money or credit rendered more modern work methods and the provision of larger quantities and cheaper raw materials impossible. The majority of craftsmen were obliged to seek supplementary sources of income in work on the land (on industrial cultures) or as hired agricultural labourers during the opium poppy, cotton and grape harvests.

#### *Bourgeois Parties and Outlaw Activity in Vardar Macedonia*

The dismemberment of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and its removal from the public political scene, together with the disorientation of the masses caused by the Edict, enabled the Serbian bourgeois parties to make of Macedonia their own political reserve. Macedonians who were antagonistically disposed towards

the regime largely turned their attention towards the Democratic Party which remained for a long time in opposition, while certain individuals became tools of the Mihailovist I.M.R.O.

The leaders of the largest Serbian bourgeois parties unscrupulously imposed their own candidates upon Macedonia. The main bourgeois parties which operated in Macedonia, the Radicals, Democrats and the Cemiyet, put up very few Macedonians as candidates – and those mostly for the posts of deputies – in the election of representatives held on 18th March 1923.

The newly formed Independent Workers' Party of Yugoslavia took part in the elections. In the Skopje district its list of candidates was headed by Dushan Tsekich, the former Communist representative. In the elections a total of twenty-four representatives were elected from the Bitola, Bregalnitsa, Kumanovo, Ohrid, Skopje, Tetovo and Tikvesh electoral districts of whom nine were Radicals, nine Democrats and six Cemiyet members. The majority of these representatives were not Macedonians. Similarly in the 1924 elections eight Serbian and six Macedonian candidates from these parties were elected. In the elections of the following year the ratio became even less favourable to the Macedonians of whom only four entered the People's Assembly as opposed to seventeen Serbs. Two years later, at the 1927 elections in Macedonia, twenty Serbs and two Macedonians were elected to the Assembly. Only those Macedonians who were faithful servants and transmitters of the Greater Serbian hegemonist policy stood as candidates for the posts of representatives at the People's Assembly.

After the Edict (Obznana) and at the time of the adoption of the St. Vitus' Day Constitution Supremacist activity and propaganda were intensified. Acting in the service of reactionary and revengeful Bulgarian circles the Supremacists increased their recruitment and sent armed bands, groups of three, or individuals into Macedonia. Their purported aim was to set up an autonomist movement and, using the slogan of autonomy, to raise the Macedonian people in a struggle against the state administration and for separation from Yugoslavia.

Impoverished Macedonian emigrants and various declassed characters were recruited to the bands as terrorists and assassins. Their brief was by means of diversions, killings and terrorism to unsettle the state's authority and sow discord and disorder.

As an answer to these actions the state authorities took steps to form a military organisation of bands, the Association against Bulgarian Bandits, with its headquarters in Shtip. Its net extended to the east of the River Vardar and west into Tikvesh. Unrestricted authority was given to the leader of the organisation, the band leader Kosta Pechanats. Because of the killing of twenty-three colonists and members of their families in the settlement of Kadrifako-

vo, near Shtip, on 16th January 1923 and of two soldiers in the village of Garvan, near Radovish, on 2nd March of the same year all the adult males from the village were taken out and shot by way of reprisal.

These massacres of the unprotected population in no way halted the terrorist activity of Todor Aleksandrov and Vancho Mihailov's despatched outlaws. Their activity on the whole took the form of assassinations of individuals. In connection with the assassination of General Kovachevich alone four hundred people were imprisoned in the Bregalnitsa district. About thirty-five thousand soldiers, frontier guards, military police and members of bands were engaged in the 'restoration of law and order' in Vardar Macedonia. Over 70 per cent of the Yugoslav military police force (12,000 out of a total of 17,000) were allotted to the 'pacification' of Macedonia.

*Communist Party of Yugoslavia  
and Independent Workers'  
Party of Yugoslavia and the  
Macedonian Question*

The elimination of the Communist Party as a legal organisation from Macedonia in 1921 caused the number of Party organisations to decrease. Such organisations continued to exist chiefly in Veles and Kumanovo. In the years 1922 and 1923 the Veles organisation issued a duplicated news-sheet called 'Spark' (Искра). It took its name from Lenin's 'Spark' (Искра) and used the hammer and sickle as its emblems. This news-sheet was written in the vernacular Macedonian of the Veles district.

The Communists founded sports, cultural and educational associations and drama groups through which they attracted and raised young people. Performances by these groups served to conceal from the authorities the setting up and maintenance of links among the various Party organisations and groups throughout Macedonia.

Party activity and influence increased noticeably after the establishment of the Independent Workers' Party of Yugoslavia. This was founded in 1923 as a legal workers' party under the ideological, political and organisational leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

Towards the end of 1923 a branch of the Independent Workers' Party of Yugoslavia was set up in Skopje. It began to publish the 'Workers' Dawn' (Радничка зора) a newspaper which was to be a continuation of the 'Socialist Dawn' (Социјалистичка зора) that had been banned by the Edict. In July 1923 a Temporary Re-

gional Secretariat of the Independent Workers' Party of Yugoslavia was formed for Macedonia. The progressive women's movement also began to be active. The Regional Secretariat in Macedonia of the women's branch of the Independent Workers' Party of Yugoslavia worked for increased political and educational awareness among the women. By the end of 1923 Independent Workers' Party organisations were actively operating in the major towns of Macedonia, including Skopje, Bitola, Veles, Shtip and Kumanovo. However, in addition to persecution and obstacles imposed by the authorities, the activity and growth of the Independent Workers' Party were impeded by the transfer of factional struggles from the Yugoslav Communist Party into the new party. This was especially the case in discussions on the national question.

In the course of 1923 a lively discussion was carried on at the Independent Workers' Party's assemblies and meetings about the Party's line on the national question in Yugoslavia. Sima Markovich had narrowed the framework and the mass basis of the national movements with his sectarian excesses saying that the national problem was only a matter of concern to the bourgeoisie and was not a question which affected all the social layers of the nation in point. Ultimately he reached the opportunistic conclusion that the national question in Yugoslavia was in fact a constitutional question and could be reduced to legal constitutional reform of the state's administrative system. For him a Macedonian nation in the modern, marxist sense of the word did not exist; although there did exist some sort of Macedonian question which was complicated by the ethnographic heterogeneity of the country. He considered that Macedonia was inhabited by members of the Balkan nations and national minorities (Albanians and Turks).

The Third Countrywide Conference of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, held illegally in Belgrade early in 1924, expressed a very authoritative condemnation of Markovich's formulation on the national question. Fifty-five delegates attended the Conference. Among them were the two from Macedonia, Antonie Grubishich and Todor Zografski, who took an active part in the discussions.

The earlier concept of a 'Yugoslav nation' existing within the state of Yugoslavia was abandoned by the Conference. In the Resolution on the National Question a new standpoint was formulated, namely that "the state of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes cannot consider itself to be a homogeneous nation state with certain national minorities but rather is a state in which the ruling class of one (the Serbian) nation is oppressing the other nations." This Resolution made it incumbent on the Party to support each people's being able to regulate its own relations with the other peoples sovereignly and on the basis of full national equality.

Thus for the first time, at the Third Countrywide Conference, an attempt was made to put the ideological, political and tactical aspects of the Macedonian question. The Party's attitude on the Macedonian question was argued and concisely expressed in a separate Resolution on the Macedonian and Thracian Questions. The watchword of a single and autonomous Macedonia was raised as the general petition of Macedonians from all parts of their homeland. In the summer of 1924 a booklet by Kosta Novakovich entitled 'Macedonia for the Macedonians! The Land for the Peasants' was published by the Independent Workers' Party of Yugoslavia. It explained the Party's attitude and tasks with regard to the acute national and agrarian questions in Macedonia. Novakovich's booklet was universally accepted by aware and progressive elements among the Macedonian people. The Communist Party's Resolution and Novakovich's booklet were an acknowledgement that the right of the Macedonian and other Yugoslav peoples to self-determination could and should be realised within a joint federation of equal republics. This opened up fresh perspectives and made allies of the Macedonian people.

#### *Workers' and Youth Movements from 1925-29*

Seeing a danger in the spread of Communist propaganda and influence in Macedonia the servants of the regime impeded the activity of the Independent Workers' Party of Yugoslavia there in all possible ways. In July 1924 the reactionary rulers mounted a fresh attack and banned the Party, the independent trades unions and the League of Working Youth of Yugoslavia. The organisations were disbanded and their property confiscated. The disbanding of the Party, trades unions and youth organisations was a crippling blow to the Party and the workers' movement in Macedonia. In the 1925 parliamentary elections, because of these steps and extraordinary government measures, no candidate from any of the opposition parties was allowed to stand in Macedonia. As a token of protest against these anti-democratic moves and against the removal of the Party from public political life the Communists put into operation an extremely effective boycott of elections in Macedonia.

The widespread arrests that were subsequently carried out in Macedonia reduced the ranks of the Party even further. In conditions of extreme illegality the Party organisations in Veles and Kumanovo, which had become the headquarters of the regional League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia and the regional Party leadership continued to be active. In 1927 and 1928 there was a

considerable activation of the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia throughout Macedonia. The chief strongholds and the largest branches were those in Veles, Kumanovo, Shtip, Skopje and Tetovo.

In these years the working conditions of the Party, the League of Communist Youth, the trades unions and other workers' and youth organisations and societies in Macedonia were extremely difficult. Throughout Yugoslavia the hegemonist rule of the Greater Serbian bourgeoisie and their anti-democratic course in domestic politics were becoming even more intolerable and gave rise to a constant worsening of the overall situation.

#### *Branches and Work of the I.M.R.O. (United) in Vardar Macedonia*

A further political organisation, the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (United), appeared on the political scene in Macedonia and was engaged in illegal activity from the year 1925. The initiating intelligence behind the founding of this organisation was the Balkan Communist Federation, founded in Sofia in 1920.

The constitution of the I.M.R.O. (United) foresaw its development into a massive popular movement involving all three parts of Macedonia and Macedonian emigrants in a struggle for a free and independent Macedonia which would voluntarily ally itself on an equal basis in a future Balkan federation.

Towards the end of 1925 and in 1926 I.M.R.O. (United) branches began to be formed in the Yugoslav part of Macedonia with the help and collaboration of the regional leadership and field organisations of the Communist Party. A strong bastion of the I.M.R.O. (United) in this part of Macedonia was formed in Veles and thence it gradually extended its network. I.M.R.O. (United) organisations and groups were set up in Kumanovo, Shtip, Skopje, Prilep, Kavadarci, Strumitsa, Gevgeliya and other places. Members of the local committees of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia were frequently to be found in the leadership of these organisations.

I.M.R.O. (United) organisations and groups in Vardar Macedonia received the newspapers 'Macedonian Work' (Македонско дело) and 'Balkan Federation' (Балканска федерација) and other illegal publications via channels in Zagreb from the I.M.R.O. (United) headquarters which, until 1928, were located in Vienna. The Vienna headquarters engaged in extensive publishing activity, printing and distributing various booklets and other publications throughout Macedonia, the Balkans, Europe and America.

With direct assistance from the Party, in the person of Rayko Yovanovish, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, the district committee of the I.M.R.O. (United) obtained a printing press and type which were installed in a house in Veles for the publication of illicit materials. On this press were printed, in addition to I.M.R.O. (United) material, Communist Party of Yugoslavia publications and others of a local nature.

In the 1927 elections I.M.R.O. (United) functionaries in Vardar Macedonia made attempts to contact and co-operate with Stjepan Radich's Croatian Peasant Party for joint election action but these attempts met with no success. Equally fruitless were attempts in Vardar Macedonia and in other parts of the country to develop the I.M.R.O. (United) into a legal national revolutionary movement, i.e. a party tolerated by the authorities. The reasons for this lay both in the organisation's left-wing pro-Communist orientation and in the fact that the basic demands of its programme would have meant discarding the existing Balkan states and frontiers. The I.M.R.O. (United)'s struggle for an autonomous Macedonia and its federation within a broader Balkan community which would entail a retailoring of the territorial boundaries in the Balkans made it equally undesirable in the eyes of the Belgrade, Sofia and Athens administrations which all saw it as an anti-state organisation.

At an illegal conference held in Skopje in December 1928 an examination and analysis of the work of the I.M.R.O (United) to date in Vardar Macedonia were carried out. The introduction of the 6th of January Dictatorship and the appearance of other problems of an organisational nature necessitated the summoning of a further conference which was held illegally in Veles of 9th January 1929. At this conference the measures which ought to be taken to safeguard the organisations and to ensure the possibility of their continued work in the situation created by the imposition of the monarchist dictatorship in Yugoslavia were examined.

The transfer of the I.M.R.O. (United) headquarters from Vienna to Berlin in 1928 impaired the maintainance of links between the emigrant leadership and the organisations in the field. The introduction of the monarchist dictatorship and the reactionaries' bloody settling of accounts with the Yugoslav Communist Party and other progressive and revolutionary elements in the country led to the arrest, in July 1929, of a hundred and thirteen organised members and supporters of the I.M.R.O. (United) and to the disbanding of its organisations and groups in Vardar Macedonia. The secret printing press was revealed by treachery, the illegal material seized and the leaders and organisational links discovered. A group of forty-nine people of Veles were taken to court in the summer of 1930 and the majority of them sentenced.

These arrests and trials made 'Macedonian Work' (Македонско дело) known to the democratic world public and inspired a large number of protests and actions throughout the world on the part of progressive social forces, distinguished writers, scholars and cultural figures and patriotic Macedonian emigrants in America. The exposed I.M.R.O. (United) members were sentenced and their imprisonment brought the organisation's activity in this part of Macedonia to a standstill. On completion of their sentences the majority of the I.M.R.O. (United) members joined in the political work and struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for the realisation of its aims.

#### *Denationalisation Policy in Vardar Macedonia*

Before the Balkan and First World Wars Macedonia had possessed considerable network of schools with a large complement of teachers set up by funds from the Balkan states for the purpose of spreading their own propaganda. In that part of Macedonia which was incorporated into the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes teachers, clergymen and other such figures who had not previously been engaged in Serbian schools or churches were now regarded as undesirable. Many Exarchate and other teachers and clergy found themselves out of work and the number of schools in Vardar Macedonia declined after the end of the First World War. Thus, for example, out of fifteen pre-war elementary schools and one grammar school in the Resen district there remained only seven elementary schools after the War. Many areas, especially villages remote from railways or roads, were left without a single school. In Shtip the grammar school remained closed for a long time and not a single elementary school functioned. It was soon realised that 'properly' directed education could be an efficient means for the 'national re-education' of the Macedonians. A system whereby schools were to be the main laboratories for denationalisation which would 'manufacture excellent Serbs' began to spread. For this reason a number of Exarchate teachers left the country while the rest were distrusted by the authorities. This policy led to the opening in 1920 of a Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje, as a branch of the Belgrade Faculty, for the provision of new teachers and educational personnel and the implanting and expansion of Serbian culture and consciousness. During the time of the Yugoslav Kingdom what were known as national subjects were mainly taught at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje.

The formation, in 1921, of the Skopje Scientific Society which was intended 'to universally educate South Serbia and Macedonia' had the same aim.

In the following years several vocational schools were opened, including the Commercial School (1922) and the Teachers' Training School in Skopje and the Agricultural School in Bitola. Through these schools and its other institutions and organisations the regime attempted to strangle all Macedonian consciousness and tradition, to root out the use of the mother tongue and to distort history and ethnography. In the enforced denationalisation and assimilation, persecution and terrorisation were employed against the Macedonians and also against the Albanian and Turkish nationalities. Nikola Pashich's government issued a special decree in support of continued and intensified propaganda and assimilatory activity in Macedonia. The decree granted certain privileges to national employees in Old Serbia and Macedonia in recognition of their services in the spreading of Serbism throughout Macedonia.

Like the schools, all public societies and organisations were subordinated to the official policy of serbianising the Macedonian people and alienating them from their own culture. Everything that was legally published and made available in Macedonia had to be in the Serbian language, and of the minority nationality languages only Turkish was tolerated.

## VARDAR MACEDONIA FROM 1925 TO 1935

### *Economic State of Macedonia during and after the World Economic Crisis*

By 1926 Macedonian agriculture had already begun to show signs of agrarian depression. In Yugoslavia the world economic crisis which broke out in 1929 affected first of all the rural economy and then its effects extended to other branches of the economy. The price of agricultural goods fell by 57 per cent from 1925 to 1935. The effects of this fall in prices were worst felt in the agrarian and backward regions among which Macedonia was numbered. In 1931 75 per cent of the total population of Macedonia was employed in agriculture and of that figure only 43.2 per cent were active.

In 1920, in view of the extensive effects of the fall in prices throughout the Yugoslav economy, the state set up the Prizad org-

anisation: Privileged Stock Association for the Export of Products from the Land. Its function was to purchase and export agricultural products, doing away with the middle man. Possessing a monopoly, Prizad was the one and only buyer of opium poppies from Macedonia and was able to dictate low prices. On top of this the Belgrade government adopted a short-sighted policy, approaching the Geneva Convention on opium and undertaking to restrict its free sale and purchase. When the Yugoslav Poisonous Drugs Law was passed in 1931 the regions for the growing of opium poppy crops were strictly defined. This too affected the continual drop in price of Macedonian opium. International cartels bought the opium at rates several times lower than before which was a further factor influencing prices.

Instead of the eight hundred to a thousand dinars per kilogram of opium which they had on average received in 1928, in 1934 and 1935 Macedonian producers received a maximum of two hundred to two hundred and fifty dinars per kilogram, a figure four times less than the previous one. This price reduction had an immediate effect on production. Whereas in 1928 production of opium in Macedonia had reached a figure of 108 tons in 1932 it fell to 2.5 tons.

The most extensive industrial crop in Macedonia, tobacco, which accounted for more than 80 per cent of the achieved total gross product from industrial crops in 1929, was also badly hit by the economic crisis. Tobacco prices, which had been between 29.74 and 38.61 dinars per kilogram in 1923 and 1924, fell rapidly in the years of the crisis: in 1930 to 19.18 and in 1931 to 7.24 dinars per kilogram. The low prices and reduced production of tobacco led to a reduction in the number of workers employed in the tobacco processing industry.

The blows which struck the agriculture of Macedonia and of the whole of Yugoslavia at the time of the world economic crisis resulted in the accumulation of vast debts by the peasants. The foundation of the Privileged Agrarian Bank for the issue of mortgages and other credit to agricultural farms did not succeed in freeing the peasants from their debts and they were forced to sell land and stock in order to pay off the loans. To halt the peasants' loss of land and their proletarianisation the state was compelled in 1932 to pass a law safeguarding the peasants in the matter of repayments and enforced sales of holdings in cases where, to meet debts, the peasants were falling prey to the banks, money-lenders and merchants.

Furthermore, the Macedonian peasantry was suffering the effects on the rural economy of the agrarian reform and colonisation. In 1931 two Yugoslav laws were passed which directly threatened the interests of the Macedonian peasants: the Law on the

Settlement of the Southern Regions and the Law Annuling the Agrarian Reform in the Cases of Large Estates. The harm and injustice caused by colonisation and the agrarian reform in Macedonia may be judged from the fact that in 1940 out of 381,245 hectares of land for distribution 142,585 hectares had been given to 17,679 families of colonists and volunteers while 30,582 agricultural tenants and peasants had received a total of only 85,511 hectares of land.

Although the agrarians reform and colonisation possessed no real economic homogeneity of purpose, since they removed the peasants from the land their implementation, nevertheless, did lead to the removal of feudal elements and to a greater influx of capitalism into the countryside. Some immigrant colonist, thanks to credit and to knowledge and experience brought from their native regions, invested their funds in the provision of improved agricultural implements and machinery and contributed to the spread of more up-to-date agricultural techniques in Macedonia. In spite of this Macedonian agriculture was of the extensive, primitive type, involving the use of a large labour force which resulted in agrarian over population.

The small and economically inadequately developed industry of Macedonia was faced with extreme difficulties during the world economic crisis. In 1932 about thirty industrial concerns in the Vardar Regional District were forced to stop production. Industry nevertheless managed to survive, largely because it was concerned with things within the compass of its own financial means. As soon as the crisis began to abate, therefore, steps were taken to set up new industrial concerns in Macedonia so that in the years 1933-35 seventeen new firms were established.

The full weight of the economic crisis fell upon the shoulders of the Macedonian people. Wages continually decreased while unemployment increased at a high rate. In 1932 31,600 workers registered at the Skopje Labour Exchange, of whom only 4,670 found employment.

In the years 1933-40 industry in Macedonia emerged totally from the crisis and the depression and assumed a more extensive form of development. In this period thirty-four new industrial concerns, representing 34.7 per cent of the total number of industrial organisation in the Yugoslav part of Macedonia, were established. The majority of the newly founded industrial concerns belonged either to the textile or food processing branches or to the building materials industry. Industry was concentrated in Skopje, which was developing into an important economic, political and communications centre, and in some of the other towns.

Investments in the mining and industry in the Yugoslav part of Macedonia consisted of 65.3 per cent Yugoslav capital and 34.7

per cent local (Macedonian) capital. Foreign (German, Swedish, Czech, French and Italian) capital was invested in the non-ferrous metal industry and in the electrical and food processing industries. Macedonian industry in this period consisted above all of light processing concerns: the food processing industry 25.3 per cent and the textile industry 10.8 per cent of the total.

Up to 1941 industrial concerns in Macedonia possessed small capacities, a low organic capital composition and primitive organisation and technology. Inherent backwardness, inadequate accumulation of capital, absence of credit and a discriminatory policy which aimed at maintaining Macedonia's economic backwardness were all reasons why in terms of capital invested, plant power and employment Macedonian industry ranked last in the industry of the Yugoslav lands.

Exposed to the harsh blows of domestic and foreign competition, craftsmanship in the towns of Macedonia declined more and more. The industrial products of Bata, Peko, Tivar and other such companies flooded the Macedonian market and succeeded in squeezing out the products of local craftsmen. The majority of craftsmen, for whom craft activity had been their only source of income, were obliged to seek supplementary incomes in other fields (tobacco production and processing; viniculture; breeding silkworms; beekeeping; opium poppy growing; harvesting, etc.). Others became impoverished and then found work as hired labourers.

The construction, with the aid of French capital, of the Veles - Prilep - Bitola railway line, which was opened to traffic in 1936, contributed to the facilitation and acceleration of trade and commerce in Vardar Macedonia. The building and opening of the Skopje to Gevgeliya international route immediately prior to the fascist invasion of Yugoslavia was a positive influence on the growth of trade in the Vardar Region.

#### *Macedonia under the Dictatorship of the Fascist Monarchy*

On 6th January 1929 King Alexander effected a coup d'état, suspending the Constitution, dissolving the Popular Assembly and proclaiming himself the 'bearer of entire authority in the country'. Thereupon the king formed a new government composed of politicians in the service of the court and headed by General Petar Zhivkovich as Premier.

The regime of this absolutist dictatorship showed its true face in the oppressive policy with all its attendant unscrupulous harshness which it adopted towards Macedonia. People who were ab-



ove all loyal to the court, such as ex-officers who had served in Macedonia, were appointed as chairmen of the Macedonian districts and the army became the minstay of the dictatorship. Every manifestation of a democratic or national nature on the part of the Macedonian people was harshly persecuted and Macedonian political life was completely strangled.

The persecutions and arrests were aimed at the illegal Communist Party of Yugoslavia, the League of Young Communists and the I.M.R.O. (United) organisation. They alone had remained as genuine opponents of the regime in Macedonia since the leaders of the bourgeois parties, and particularly of the Greater Serbian parties, active in Macedonia accepted the dictatorship or at least offered no serious resistance. In the summer of 1929 large-scale arrests of Macedonian Party members and members of the Yugoslav League of Young Communists who were maintaining links via Zagreb with the Central Committee were carried out, mainly in Kumanovo and Veles. At the same time a hundred and thirteen I.M.R.O. (United) members and sympathisers were arrested in Veles, Skopje, Prilep, Kavadarsti, Shtip and other places and the I.M.R.O. (United) organisations were finally eliminated from Macedonia. By 1929 the Greater Serbian hegemonist regime was losing faith in the possibility of achieving the denationalisation and assimilation of the Macedonian people through its schools and other educational institutions and the measures that had been enacted in accordance with the state's educational policy. It, therefore, took the step of converting some of the grammar schools into partial grammar schools or self-supported schools. The grammar schools in Strumitsa, Resen, Kavadarsti, and Kichevo were closed by law. The lower grade grammar schools in Gvrgeliya, Kavadarsti, Kochani, Struga, Resen, Kichevo, Debar and Gostivar were also shut down. The full grammar schools in Veles, Kumanovo, Shtip, Prilep and Ohrid were transformed into partial schools. The Teachers' Training School in Shtip was also closed down.

As a consequence of the harsh and discriminatory stance of the authorities the entire eastern region of Vardar Macedonia, with a population of several hundreds of thousands, was left without a single grammar or other secondary school. The extreme dissatisfaction and bitterness that this aroused among the people was forcefully expressed in the demonstration of the townspeople of Shtip. The reduction in the number of educational institutions in Macedonia was continued in the following years. In 1932 two more grammar schools ceased functioning and this reduced the number of classes to eleven and entailed the dismissal of a large number of teachers.

The Vardar Regional District, which included parts of South Serbia and Kosovo as well as Vardar Macedonia, was formed in accordance with the new administrative and territorial division of the state effected at the close of 1929. The state's title was also changed from the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes to the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The new administrative and territorial division reflected the tendency towards the strengthening of unitarism and what was known as integral Yugoslavianism, and the attempt to subdue totally and assimilate the oppressed nations.

In the period of the upsurge and greatest pressure of the dictatorship, from 1929 to 1931, public political life in Macedonia was virtually extinguished. The only celebrations that were held were the official celebrations of state holidays. The authorities took considerable pains to establish and spread throughout Macedonia the so-called 'national organisations', the Hawk (Coko), the Adriatic Guard (Јадранска стража) Company of the Serbian Sisters (Којо српских сестара). These did not succeed in striking root among the masses, however, and their members were mainly drawn from the ranks of the state administrative system.

In the first years of the dictatorship and later the regime made considerable efforts to strengthen and extend the network of armed bands, known as the National Guard. Its Macedonian branches were led by the band leader Iliya Trifunovich-Birchanin, General Ristich and Metropolitan Joseph of Skopje. As this organisation was compromised in the eyes of the people the authorities, on 11th January 1931, founded the association known as the Yugoslav Youth of the Vardar Regional District in an effort to influence young people. Its platform was a greater state and unitarist one. The association was founded and operated with the blessing and financial support of General Zhika Lazich but its membership consisted of only a dozen or so bourgeois intellectuals and careerists in Skopje.

In the autumn and towards the close of 1931 there came about a certain improvement in the overall political conditions in Yugoslavia and this was felt in Macedonia too. This limited improvement came as a result of the crisis into which the dictatorship had fallen. On 3rd September 1931 the king issued a new constitution, wishing to transfer to other shoulders the responsibility for the difficult situation and for the future. The Decree Constitution (Oktroiran ustav) envisaged a reorganisation of the state and the creation of two representative bodies (two chambers): the Assembly and the Senate. The king would retain the right to appoint the government which would be answerable not to the Assembly but to him. The king personally appointed a large number of the senators. This parliamentarianism was a façade behind which centralism lay concealed. The constitution in fact sanctioned the existing

dictatorship. In addition, a new electoral law was passed which meant that only those lists of candidates which included candidates in all the electoral districts throughout the country would gain the necessary approval. It was on the basis of this law that, on 8th November 1931, the election of popular representatives was carried out with a public ballot. Only a single list of candidates, that with the Prime Minister, Petar Zhivkovich, at its head, was put forward at this election.

In 1932 the task of re-establishing and integrating the various Communist Party of Yugoslavia and League of Young Communist organisations in Macedonia gained a certain impetus from an illegal counselling session held in Skopje. The session devoted most of its attention to questions relating to the work of Communists in the trades union organisation and workers' sports, cultural and artistic societies and groups.

The process of establishing links among the various Party organisations in Macedonia led to the formation in mid-1933 of a District Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Macedonia with its seat in Skopje. Nikola Orochanets, Kosta Solev-Ratsin and Zhivoin Dzhurchich were elected members of this District Committee. In relatively short time the newly formed committee managed to establish links among the various Party organisation and to form local committees in several towns, including Skopje, Veles, Kumanovo and Tetovo. To facilitate the realisation of the tasks it had set itself the Macedonian District Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia began to print its own illegal Party material and to distribute it to local organisations.

November 1933 saw the first publication of the illegal monthly 'Spark' (Искра), the organ of the Macedonian District Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, as an aid to the more successful spread of Party propaganda and agitation. 'Spark' (Искра) attempted to consider and throw light upon all the more important questions and events through the prism of the policy of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Because of the raid upon members of the District Committee and other Party functionaries and their arrest in early 1934, however, 'Spark' (Искра) ceased to appear and to carry out its positive function.

### *1933 District Elections and the Strengthening of the Workers' Movement*

The dissatisfaction of the masses and their demands for positive changes in the socio-political life of Yugoslavia contributed to the administrative crisis which faced the 6th of January dictator-

ship and led to its steady and inevitable decline. The resignation of General Petar Zhivkovich's government in April 1932 and the succession of short-lived governments of V. Markovich, Dr. Milan Srshich and Nikola Uzunovich were a mark of the endeavours being made by the ruling circles. They hoped that their promises and resignations would be looked upon as a 'relaxing' of the dictatorship. In an attempt to escape the recent tensions and upheavals in the country Nikola Uzunovich's government took steps, in the second half of 1933, towards the holding of district elections throughout Yugoslavia. In accordance with the new law regulating the various districts the elections were held in the regional districts. The district elections in Vardar Macedonia were left to the last.

The announcement of the district elections and the agitation that surrounded them led to a revival of political activity in Macedonia as in the other Yugoslav lands. In the election campaign the Y.R.P.D. (Yugoslav Radical Peasants' Democracy), the creature and coalition of the dictatorial regime, predominated. The leading personality in its organisations in the Vardar Regional District was the well-known administrator of Greater Serbian policy in Macedonia, the ex-band-leader and representative for Prilep, Vasilie Trbich.

The small number of supporters of the Yugoslav Youth of the Vardar Regional District organisation were yoked into the district election campaign activity. Because this organisation had not succeeded in expanding beyond the narrow framework of an isolated nationalist body created from above whose character did not alter when it was renamed the Yugoslav Renaissance organisation in November 1933, it was not in a position to develop any large-scale, constructive activity among the younger generations in Macedonia.

The attitude of the Communist leadership, that is of the Macedonian District Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, towards the district elections was to boycott them. The main reason for this position was the fact that the authorities used every means at their disposal to disallow the putting forward of candidates who did not feature on the ruling party's list.

In addition to illegal forms and means whereby it could influence the masses the Party found and made use of legal channels (the press, public meetings and lectures) to present and express the demands and interests of the workers. Significant articles were written for the Skopje newspaper 'Vardar' by Kosta Solev-Ratsin and Vasil Antevski on workers' and trades union organisations, the unemployed and the low wages paid to workers and the election of the Workers' Chamber in Skopje.

The results of the activity of the Party's organisation were soon seen in the outbreak of strikes of the timber and leather wor-

kers in Skopje towards the end of 1933. Low wages and excessive hours of work had spurred the workers to strikes and tariff activity. Textile workers in Skopje were working twelve-hour shifts; wages in the locomotive repair shops and the Treska factory had been drastically curtailed; and the conditions in the tobacco Monopoly and other smaller concerns were intolerable. The strike in Y. Yovanovich's shoe-upper workshop in Skopje, where the workers had not hitherto been organised, demonstrated the importance of workers' organisation and solidarity: thanks to these they succeeded in putting down attempts to defuse their struggle by means of strike-breakers.

The social-democrat leaders of the 'yellow' trades unions were working towards a blunting of class awareness and of the workers' struggle and the elimination of workers' political activity. In the course of 1933 well-known leaders of the former Social Democrats, including Zhivko Topalovich, Bogdan Krekich and Milorad Belich, visited Macedonia, holding meetings and delivering lectures. As tools of the ruling class they employed social demagoguery and denunciations of the Communists and militant workers thereby causing considerable damage to the revolutionary workers' movement.

The election of new district administrations was held in Vardar Macedonia on 15th October 1933. In the four hundred and forty districts which comprised the Vardar Regional District 1,113 lists of candidates were submitted of which the vast majority (1,084) belonged to the ruling Yugoslav National Party. In fact the government had by a variety of methods disallowed the registration and verification of lists of candidates from opposition parties or groups in Macedonia. These government moves, police terrorisation and a variety of malversations rendered the electoral body apathetic towards elections in which it was compelled to vote by public ballot and only for the candidates of the ruling regime. The figures in the district elections in the Vardar Regional District clearly showed the disposition of the people. From a total of 354,242 registered electors only 246,976 came out to vote in the elections, that is only 69.79 per cent of the total number of authorised voters. This low percentage of voters was in large measure a result of the boycott recommended by the leaders of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in Macedonia.

The progressive forces in Macedonia which, under the influence and guidance of the Communist Party, had achieved success in the matter of a socio-political mobilisation suffered a considerable set-back early in 1934. There was a raid during the distribution of 'Spark' (Iskra), the illegal organ of the District Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Macedonia, and in a short while fifteen leading Communists from Skopje, Kumanovo, Veles,

Tetovo and Debar fell into the hands of the police. Their arrest brought the work of the Party organisation to a standstill.

While the Communists were persecuted unmercifully, right-wing Social Democrats were allowed by the authorities to hold meetings and conferences throughout Macedonia and the whole of Yugoslavia with a view to founding a socialist party. They were not, however, able to find even the minimal number of supporters necessary to serve as members of initiatory committees for the founding of a party. The formation of a temporary Regional Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party in mid-1934 resulted in the renewal of the Party organisation in Macedonia. The newly formed leadership began to issue its own illegal organ, the 'Bulletin' or 'Communist Bulletin'. At the same time a secondary schools youth committee was set up. The Party succeeded in establishing sound roots among the students of the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje who, together with pupils from the grammar and other secondary schools, carried out a large number of successful actions. That summer progressive students from the Skopje Faculty of Philosophy toured Veles, Prilep, Bitola, Ohrid, Struga and Tetovo where their vocal group Obilich gave concerts. Organised students were engaged by the Regional Committee in the publication and distribution of Party propaganda material.

The Regional Committee, in the shape of the editorial board of the 'Bulletin' frequently looked into the questions of the rôle and place of the conscious working class avant-garde and of the Communist Party in the national struggle and movement. The practice whereby Communist Parties in certain regions (countries) with a compact but nationally subjugated population appeared and were known by the name of the Communist Party of the respective states (e.g. in Macedonia in Yugoslavia and in Bessarabia in Rumania) was pointed to as a shortcoming. The enormous significance of the existence of 'independent Parties of the oppressed nations' was indicated and it was stated that it was 'high time that the Central Committees of the Communist Parties of Yugoslavia and of Rumania both pose and solve the question of the formation of Communist Parties of Slovenia, of Croatia and of Macedonia within the framework of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia... and the Communist Party of Bessarabia, on the same principle, within the framework of the Communist Party of Rumania.'

The demand which issued from this attitude was soon to be realised within the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. At the Fourth Countrywide Conference of the Yugoslav Communist Party, held in Lyublyana on 24th and 25th December 1934, a separate resolution on the work of the Party among the nationally subjugated masses was passed. The Conference held to the view that in Yugoslavia the national question could and should be resolved within the

framework of general efforts for 'the revolutionary reorganisation of Yugoslav society' and through the revolutionary struggle of the workers and of the nationally subjugated peoples and minorities under the leadership of the working class. To achieve these aims the Conference resolved to found Communist Parties of Croatia and of Slovenia, and a Communist Party of Macedonia 'in the immediate future'. At the Conference itself it was not possible to pass an immediate resolution on the founding of a Communist Party of Macedonia. This had to be postponed to 'the immediate future' because in that same month there had been a raid on the Party organisation in Macedonia followed by arrest of a number of leading Party activists. The raid endangered the Skopje Party organisation but also involved Party workers from Veles, Kumanovo and Tetovo.

### *1935 Election Struggles and the Spread of the Anti-Fascist Movement*

At the end of 1934, to mollify popular dissatisfaction and opposition, Bogolyub Yeftich's government promised that it would liberalise the regime and attempt to attract and activate a wider circle of political and public figures in the state administration.

The gap between these official pronouncements and the facts was seen at once in the method and outcome of the extraordinary district elections in Macedonia. These extraordinary elections were held in accordance with the decree of the Minister for Internal Affairs on the reduction of the number of districts, on 23rd December 1934. In the sixty-nine districts of the Vardar Regional District two hundred and nine lists of candidates in all were put up and the candidates belonged to a man to the ruling Yugoslav Party. As it was impossible to propose other lists for the new district administrations only Yugoslav National Party candidates were elected.

At the beginning of 1935 Bogolyub Yeftich's government was compelled to make a fresh move, supposedly for the relaxing of the dictatorship, in its domestic policy. Following the amnesty which had been granted to certain bourgeois opposition politicians in February 1935 the government dissolved the Popular Assembly and announced parliamentary elections for 5th May that year. Immediately after this the old political parties became active once more and there was a general resuscitation of political life in the country.

The bourgeois parties came to an agreement whereby they formed the bloc known as the United Opposition (Удружена опозиција). The bloc consisted of the Peasant - Democratic Coalition,

the Democratic Party, the Agrarian Party, the Yugoslav Moslem Organisation and a part of the Radical Party. Vladimir Machek was accepted as the leader of the United Opposition.

When the attempts of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia to put up an independent workers' list proved unsuccessful its representatives made contact and held talks with Machek about joint action at the elections. Machek, however, categorically rejected any form of collaboration. Despite this the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia issued a directive to Party organisations throughout the country to dispose their supporters and sympathisers towards voting for the United Opposition.

The Party organisation in Macedonia had been noticeably weakened by the raid of 1934. At the outset of the electoral campaign it was not in a position to undertake any extensive activity. Above all it needed to renew and strengthen itself and so a Party Conference was held in February 1935. A new Regional Committee was chosen at the Conference and it was decided that its temporary seat should be in Kumanovo.

The election of representatives to the Popular Assembly took place on 5th May 1935 and, according to the figures officially announced, the government (i. e. Y. N. P.)'s list won 1,747,000 votes and that of the United Opposition 1,076,000. Representative mandates were not divided between the government and the opposition in relation to the number of votes gained but, on the basis of the infamous 'Donts' system, the government gained three hundred and three mandates while the United Opposition gained only sixty-seven. In the territory of the Vardar Regional District the government list received forty-four mandates while that of the United Opposition received only one.

The majority of the ruling Yugoslav National Party candidates either were not of Macedonian origin or did not live in Macedonia and were unacquainted with the needs and demands of the Macedonian people.

Dissatisfied with the election results and the allotment of mandates, the leaders of the United Opposition declared that the elections had not been carried out freely and legally and that therefore their representatives would abstain from taking part in the business of the newly elected Popular Assembly. This development in the domestic political situation led to the fall of Bogolyub Yeftich's government and to the formation, at the end of June 1935, of a new government headed by Milan Stoyadinovich, the previous Finance Minister and one of Yugoslavia's large-scale financial magnates. Mehmed Spaho, the leader of the Yugoslav Moslem Community, and Anton Koroshets, leader of the Slovene Clerical Party, were members of his government.

Accepting and putting into operation the attitudes adopted by the Seventh Comintern Congress, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia succeeded in rousing the masses and stimulating them to greater activity in the struggle against fascism both in the country and abroad. The Plenary Session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was held in Split on 9th and 10th July 1935 and was attended by a representative from Macedonia, Mire Anastasov. The Session made a large advance in overcoming former vagaries and inconsistencies in connection with the essential nature of fascism and the attitude towards the national question.

The viewpoints expressed at the Split Plenum on the posing and solving of the national question in Yugoslavia were of particular importance. Macedonian workers accepted the revolutionary methods and actions organised by the Party which alone stood up for their life interests and demands.

The increase in unemployment in Macedonia – in 1935 about thirty-two thousand unemployed were registered at the labour exchanges in Skopje and Bitola – were a cause of considerable dissatisfaction in the ranks of the working class. The wages of those workers who were in employment were declining. Industry in Macedonia was working at only half its capacity and the food processing industry was particularly badly hit.

The dissatisfaction of the masses and particularly of the workers in this situation erupted in the form of tariff action and strikes which spread and affected various branches. Thus, in September 1935, the barbers and hairdressers in Skopje went on strike. Macedonian building workers joined in the general strike of building workers throughout Yugoslavia which broke out at the beginning of 1936 and involved several tens of thousands of workers in the trade in Belgrade, Zagreb, Sarajevo, Slovenia, Macedonia and other areas. The building workers in Skopje and elsewhere also carried on a lengthy strike in July 1936 and managed to achieve the acceptance of their demands: the fixing of a minimum wage, a ten-hour working day and the payment of fifty per cent extra for overtime.

The police regularly intervened on behalf of the employers in cases where workers made efforts of this nature to improve their living conditions. In order to curtail the organisation of Macedonian workers and to strangle their economic and political struggle, the regime shut down the workers' centres in Skopje and Prilep, banned the activity of the Abrashevich association and dealt a heavy blow to the Party organisation and the entire workers' movement in Macedonia by the arrest of Party and trades union functionaries. A fresh upheaval which began in the upper reaches, in the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party, led to

the imprisonment of members of the Regional Committee and the disclosure of Party cells in Skopje and in Kumanovo.

## SOCIO-POLITICAL ACTIVATION IN VARDAR MACEDONIA PRIOR TO THE SECOND WORLD WAR

### *M.A.N.A.P.O. and the Progressive Students' Movement in Macedonia*

Despite the intentional denationalisation policy of the Greater Serbian hegemonist regime and other obstacles to the creation of a Macedonian intelligentsia, the body of academic youth in Macedonia was gradually increasing. In the mid-30's it was taking an ever more active part in socio-political life. A large number of Macedonian students were being educated in the universities of Belgrade and Zagreb. These were strongholds of the progressive and Communist movements and here the students came into contact with these movements; they became acquainted with and espoused their revolutionary ideas and methods.

There were Macedonians among the Belgrade and Zagreb University students who engaged in strike action, demonstrations, conflicts with the police and other similar actions. In February 1935 the students of the Skopje Faculty of Philosophy came out on strike in token of their solidarity with the Belgrade University students over the killing of the student Mirko Srzentic by the police. They also joined in the general strike of the militant Yugoslav university youth in 1936 in support of university autonomy.

As in the case of the struggles of the other Yugoslav students those of the Macedonian students came under the leadership of the Party and more and more assumed the character of open political clashes with the regime. A major factor in this development was the Yugoslav Communist Party's positive evolution in the matter of solving the national question in Yugoslavia.

The transfer of the Organisational Secretariat of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, with Josip Broz as the Organisational Secretary, to the country itself was an important turning point which led to a general strengthening of Party activity, to the growth of the democratic anti-fascist movement in Yugoslavia and to an active demonstration of the resolutions and stances adopted on the national and other fundamental questions. These resolutions and directives played a decisive part in the appe-



arance of a new current in Macedonia with Macedonian students and Communist intellectuals at its centre.

The beginnings of this movement date from slightly earlier but it was largely in the spring and summer of 1936 that its platform and strategy were developed. The ideological basis and principles of the movement called the Macedonian Popular Movement (Македонски народен покрет or МАНАПО for short) were contained in a document called Political Declaration (Политичка декларација). This Declaration was adopted at a special illegal meeting of progressive and patriotic Macedonian anti-fascist students in Zagreb. It was signed by virtually all the Macedonian students at Zagreb University and then sent to Belgrade to be adopted and signed by the Macedonian students there. About three quarters of the combined total of Macedonian students at Zagreb and Belgrade Universities signed this Political Declaration.

Significant in the ideological and political shaping of the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) was a meeting, held in Ohrid on 28th August 1936, of students, intellectuals and other progressive Macedonians from Skopje, Kumanovo, Veles, Bitola, Prilep, Kavadarci, Resen, Ohrid and Tetovo. Those who attended the meeting were Communists and convinced anti-fascists, and they soon reached unanimity on the fundamental aims, methods and forms of the activity of the M.P.M. (МАНАПО). Meeting concluded that the Movement should fight for the national freedom and equality of the Macedonian people within the framework of a Yugoslavia which would be transformed into a federative state community. It was emphasised that the Macedonian people's struggle should be merged with that of the other Yugoslav peoples and nationalities and of the progressive social forces in Yugoslavia in order to achieve the elementary democratic rights (of freedom of assembly, contact and the press); to gain an amnesty for political prisoners and to have free parliamentary elections with a secret ballot. Those present at the meeting agreed that the Movement should seek a change in Yugoslavia's foreign policy through the establishment of diplomatic relations and the conclusion of a treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union.

These principles and demands of the Macedonian Popular Movement, accepted under the influence and with the support of the Communists, were then successfully popularised and spread among the masses of the Macedonian people. At the same time contact was established and meetings and conferences held with members of the United Opposition and other politically active individuals mostly from the ranks of the local petty bourgeoisie.

Lengthy talks with eminent members of the United Opposition were held in Skopje in 1936 and 1937 with a view to the formation of a joint democratic and anti-fascist political movement. The talks did not, however, reach a successful conclusion because

of the categorical refusal by the representatives of the bourgeois opposition parties to treat the Macedonian people as a separate nation, i.e. to recognize their right to national freedom, equality and growth within a federative state community of the Yugoslav peoples. The Macedonian Party organisation did manage to establish links and to collaborate with certain local members of the opposition parties who were more liberal in their outlook.

The 1936 district elections were the occasion of a considerable rapprochement of the Party and the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) and certain more left-wing elements in the parties of the United Opposition within the framework of a popular front programme and strategy. With leaflets, news-sheets and other illegal material, at pre-election public meetings and through various social, cultural and educational societies in which they had their own people, the Communists and the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) made clear the need for a Popular Front. They explained the essence of such a front and the prospect of the achievement of national and democratic rights and the freedom of the Macedonian people through the united struggle of the working class, the peasantry and the nationally subjugated peoples and nationalities of Yugoslavia. At the 1936 elections the M.N.P. (МАНАПО) made an attempt to participate in Prilep and one of the Prespa districts with an 'independent' list but the police intervened banning this and the attempt met with failure. According to official figures in the district elections held on 6th December 1936 in Macedonia, that is to say the Vardar Regional District, out of a total of 376,463 on the electoral roll 263,102 people voted, i.e. seventy-two per cent. Candidates of the United Opposition were victorious in nine districts, while the so-called 'non-defined' candidates won in seven districts and bourgeois candidates in two.

The opposition candidates gained a particularly large vote in Veles and Prilep where they were supported by the Communist Party and the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) who were active on their behalf.

The activation and mobilisation of the masses in Macedonia achieved during the 1936 district election campaign was a stimulus leading to the consolidation of the activity of the Party and the M.P.M. in the following years.

The Vardar Societies of Macedonian students in Zagreb and in Belgrade became focal points of intensive cultural and educational activity. They held lectures and discussions and read papers on current socio-political matters. The thread running through all of these was the Macedonian national question which they examined from a number of aspects.

The progressive students took part in the work of the illegal Party and youth organisations in Macedonia and in the activity of



various workers' and citizens' cultural and educational societies, clubs and other organisations. Their activity in the different sections of the Abrashevich society, in trades union choirs, reading rooms, people's universities and teetotal lodges was of importance. With the help of these students the Party managed to gain control of many such cultural and educational societies in Skopje, Veles, Kumanovo, Prilep, Bitola and elsewhere.

The new-sheet 'Our Newspaper' (Наш весник), whose editor-in-chief was Boro Shukar, was founded in Zagreb to put forward the platform of the M.P.M. (МАНАПО). Communist influence was ensured by the editorial board. Among the news-sheet's collaborators were Kosta Solev-Ratsin, Strasho Pindzhur and other distinguished militant workers and students. It was decided that the publication of 'Our Newspaper' (Наш весник) should be undertaken in Zagreb because the majority of the controlling cell of the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) were there and because it was thought that insofar as the news-sheet was printed outside Macedonia there would be fewer obstacles on the part of the authorities. However, immediately upon the publication of the first issue it was seized by the police and any further publication or distribution of it banned.

*Macedonians in the Anti-Fascist  
Struggle and the 1938  
Parliamentary Elections*

The police system of the bourgeois rulers was not able to halt the growth of the anti-fascist and democratic and national democratic movements of the Macedonian masses, of which the Communists formed the most progressive wing. The anti-fascist and revolutionary disposition of progressive Macedonians was expressed to the full in their attitude towards the Spanish Civil War (1936-39).

The Macedonians reacted to the appeals of international anti-fascist public opinion and of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for universal assistance to the freedom-loving Spanish people by collecting material aid and despatching volunteers. Pamphlets and other illegal materials which reached members and sympathisers of the Party and the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) determinedly defended the justified struggle of the Popular Front Spanish Republic.

Macedonians were numbered among the Yugoslav volunteers who came from different parts of the world to join the international brigades. Some of the Macedonian volunteers who took part in the Spanish Civil War came direct from Yugoslavia while others, political or economic emigrants, reached Spain from the U.S.S.R., France, the U.S.A. and Canada. Macedonian volunteers,

like the other Yugoslav volunteers who fought in the ranks of the international brigades, exhibited a high degree of consciousness, morale and bravery and some were given positions of responsibility (e.g. Alekso Demniewski-Bauman), receiving public recognition and decorations from the Republican government of Spain. Some (e.g. Gancho Hadzhi Panzov) left their bones on the Spanish battlefields.

In 1937 there was an upheaval in the Party organisation which affected almost the whole of Macedonia. More than a hundred Communists and the members of the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia from Veles, Kumanovo, Prilep, Shtip, Skopje, Gevgeliya and elsewhere were arrested. This was the greatest upheaval in the Party organisation in Macedonia to date and resulted in the Regional Committee and a large number of the leaders of local committees in Macedonia falling into the hands of the police. The disclosure of the Party organisation and its contacts and the sentencing of these functionaries and activists dealt an extremely weighty blow to the Party organisation in Macedonia. It altogether ceased to exist, albeit only for a short time.

This coincided in time with the Comintern's granting of a mandate, at the end of 1937, to Josip Broz-Tito, for the formation of a new leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the setting up, early in 1938, of a new Central Committee headed by Josip Broz-Tito. These two events were a decisive turning point in the history of the Party. A strong revolutionary elan was felt in the other lands and regions of Yugoslavia while in Macedonia it was first necessary to work to achieve the resuscitation of the Party organisation. The Central Committee showed an attentive concern, sending delegates and instructors to Macedonia. In this situation the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) was left without the support which up till then it had been given by Party activists in Macedonia and to which it owed many of its achievements to date.

The temporary loss of this support led to a significant restriction of the activity and influence of the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) in Macedonia.

In opposition to the European and Yugoslav rulers' predisposition to capitulation in the face of fascist aggression and to directing the German war machine against the U.S.S.R. at the price of the sacrifice of Czechoslovakia's neutrality, the Communist Party of Yugoslavia organised a large-scale registration of volunteers from all parts of Yugoslavia for the defence of Czechoslovakia. There were many Macedonians among the volunteers and the Czech Consulate in Skopje was constantly receiving further registrations and a large number of letters and telegrams expressing militant solidarity and anti-fascist sentiments.

At the beginning of 1938 two counselling sessions were held illegally in Veles in connection with the firmer organisation and activation of Communists in Macedonia. These were attended by delegates from Party organisations and groups from several Macedonian towns, including Skopje, Prilep, Kumanovo, Veles, Gevgeliya and Shtip. In mid-1938, as a result of the resolutions passed and measures taken and of assistance from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, regular Party contact was established among the different towns of Macedonia, local leaderships and commissariats were elected and the Party's positive influence was to be felt once more. An important contributing factor was the contact with the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, through the medium of Moshe Piyade, and its sending of its own delegate and instructor to Macedonia.

Prior to the 1938 election of representatives to the Popular Assembly leading activists in the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) undertook extensive preparatory measures. Talks were held to explore the possibility of including the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) in the opposition bloc and the putting up of its candidates within the framework of the United Opposition. Without exception the leaders of the Serbian bourgeois parties in opposition categorically refused to accept any proposal or solution of this nature. Authorised representatives of the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) in Belgrade and Zagreb, among them Kuzman Yosifofski, made contact with Dr. Vladimir Machek, the leader of the Croat Peasant Party who headed the United Opposition list of candidates. They proposed to Machek that M.P.M. (МАНАПО) candidates in the election of representatives from Macedonia should link up directly with the leader of the Peasant Party. But on this occasion too Machek rejected the proposal.

These circumstances, together with obstacles imposed by the authorities, meant that the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) was not able to figure independently in the 1938 parliamentary elections. Attempts by Macedonian Communists to place their candidates on the list of the Party of the Working People (Странка радног народа) which had been created by the Communist Party of Yugoslavia were also unsuccessful. The questions of forming Macedonian branches of the Party of the Working People, of drawing up a strategy and of participation in the elections were examined at an illegal counselling session held in Katlanovo and attended by Party organisation representatives (including Strahil Gigov, Panche Peshev, Blagoy Popovski and Risto Bayalski) from Skopje, Kumanovo, Veles, Prilep and Gevgeliya.

The election struggles were particularly keen in places where the Communists were most active and influential, not giving in to the civil and military police who broke up their gatherings and

meetings. This was especially the case in Veles where the people answered the Communists' appeal and rose up in a demonstration of protest and forced the authorities to release Strahil Gigov, who had been arrested for engaging in agitation in the villages. The Prilep authorities were similarly compelled to release Rampo Levkov and his comrades who had been arrested three days before the elections to prevent them from engaging in agitation.

The parliamentary elections of 11th December 1938 were carried out according to the old, reactionary electoral law with public voting, the buying of votes, falsification and intimidation. According to the official figures seventy-four per cent of the electorate took part in the elections, 54.09 per cent voting for candidates of the ruling Yugoslav Radical Union and 44.9 per cent for United Opposition candidates while less than one per cent voted for the list of the Fascist organisation Assembly (36op) headed by Dimitar Lyotich.

Despite the falsifications the election results showed an increase of about three hundred thousand in the number of votes for United Opposition candidates over the number cast in the 1935 elections and a decrease of over a hundred thousand votes for the ruling candidates. Among United Opposition candidates in Macedonia the highest proportional votes were gained by those put up or supported by the Communist Party or the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) i.e. candidates who were linked to the Serbian Peasants' Party (Y. Yovanovich).

Peasants' Party candidates received the highest proportional vote in Macedonia chiefly because the Communists and M.P.M. (МАНАПО) activists urged the masses to vote for them. One candidate linked to the Peasants' Party list entered the Popular Assembly thanks to votes gained as a result of the engagement of the Communist and left-orientated Macedonian intelligentsia. On the other hand Lyotich's Fascist organisation Assembly (36op) obtained only 133 votes, i.e. 0.05 per cent, in the entire Vardar Regional District.

The lively political activity that accompanied the election gave rise to further growth of the anti-fascist and national liberation movements and to a general left-wing orientation of the masses in Macedonia. Successful consolidation and activation of the Party organisations in Veles, Prilep and elsewhere made it possible for these towns to become centres of political activity. The strengthening of the Party organisation caused the gradual disappearance of the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) from political life and, with the incorporation of its founders and leaders into the Communist movement it finally ceased to exist. During the period of its active existence the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) had played a positive rôle in the argumentation and popularisation of the thesis of the Macedonian nation as

a national entity differentiated from the other Balkan nations, and had contributed to the strengthening and affirmation of Macedonian national consciousness. Among the Movement's positive features was its orientation towards the solution of the Macedonian question within the framework of fundamentally democratically organised Yugoslavia.

## VARDAR MACEDONIA AT THE OUTBREAK OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

### *Upsurge of the Anti-fascist and Communist Movements in Macedonia*

The increasingly acute socio-economic and national contradictions in Yugoslavia served to increase the dissatisfaction of the mass of the people with the government's entire domestic and foreign policies. In order to provoke a crisis and bring down the government several ministers handed in their resignations on the pretext that Stoyadinovich's government was an obstacle to the solving of the Croatian question. Dragicha Tsvetkovich, the former Minister for Social Policy, formed a new government on 4th February 1939, whose principal task was to reach agreement with the leaders of the Peasants' Democratic Coalition.

Cvetkovich's assumption of the helm of government fell at a time of fresh conquests by the Fascist states of Europe. Nazi Germany had trampled underfoot its previous treaties and promises and occupied Czechoslovakia in March 1939; Italian Fascist troops had landed in Albania in April of the same year. Tsvetkovich's government did not so much as raise its voice against these Fascist acts of aggression.

A particularly important factor in Macedonia was the militant activity of progressive young people against attempts to spread Fascist propaganda and to hold public meetings of Lyotich's Assembly Party (36op). The members of the Fascist organisation were prevented from holding conferences in the hall of the Post Office Centre or in other premises in Skopje. The house to house distribution of leaflets in April 1939 in Skopje and certain other Macedonian towns by the handful of the organisation's supporters only brought about a negative reaction on the part of the young people and the citizenry of Macedonia who did not wish to hear of Lyotich and his Party, knowing full well that they were paid agents of Nazi Fascism.

The upsurge of the democratic anti-Fascist movement in Macedonia was boosted by the founding of the influential newspaper 'Our Word' (Наша реч) in February 1939. This was started as the legal mouthpiece of the Temporary Regional Committee for Macedonia of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. The first issue of the paper came out on 25th February 1939. Despite frequent bans it continued to appear until 6th January 1941. It carried articles on various current problems, news, contributions, reviews and other material, some in the Macedonian language. The editorial board consisted of Communist Party members and sympathisers, including Milosh Matsura, Deyan Aleksich, Nada Bogdanova, Boshko Shilyegovich, Dushko Popovich, Radovan Lalich, Perisha Savelich and Anton Kolendich. Literary works and articles by the Macedonian poets Kosta Solev-Ratsin, Mite Bogovski, Volche Naumovski, Kire Dimov and Aleksandar Gradachki were published in the newspaper.

'Our Word' (Наша реч) regularly informed the public about the latest political events seen through the prism of evaluations which represented the standpoint of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

The Party organisation in Macedonia developed along such lines and its consolidation soon made possible the direct involvement of Communists, Young Communists and their sympathisers in a large number of socio-political actions. Of particular significance among these were the celebrations of the hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Great French Bourgeois-Democratic Revolution. Performances, formal meetings and lectures were held in the larger towns of Macedonia and a special brochure entitled "150th Anniversary of the French Revolution" was published.

As a result of steps taken to implement the conclusions of what was known as the 'May Counselling Session' of leading activists in the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, firm Party channels and links between the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and Macedonia were established in the summer of 1939 and a new regional Party leadership for Macedonia was formed. The Secretary of this new committee was Blazho Orlandich and its members Ortse Nikolov, Strahil Gigov and Dobrivoye Vidich.

The outbreak of the Second World War, which started on 1st September 1939, with Germany's attack on Poland and with Britain and France's declaration of war on Germany, had an enormous influence on the subsequent development of the situation and of relations in Yugoslavia. This was felt in the behaviour of the bourgeois circles, in the orientation and activity of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, in the working class and the progressive and patriotic forces in the country. The Party's principal efforts

were towards the prevention of Yugoslavia's involvement in the war or her alliance with either of the warring imperialist blocs and the attempt to ensure bread, peace and freedom for the masses.

By a large number of reactionary measures the Tsvetkovich-Machek government attempted to place the burden of economic hardship on the shoulders of the working people and to stifle their resistance. The violent and reactionary measures of the pro-Fascist regime were particularly crude in Macedonia and yet they did not manage to break the militant spirit of the popular masses who increasingly saw in the Party the only support for their interests and demands. Efforts to organise trades unions in Macedonia produced ever greater results. The workers continually stated their demands and carried out actions of a definitely political character, not limiting themselves to safeguarding their own economic interests. Thus at the Conference of Textile Workers in Skopje on 8th October 1939 demands were made for full freedom to organise trades unions and a halt to the persecution and maltreatment of workers' functionaries by the regime.

The Assembly of Tobacco Monopoly Workers in Skopje in December 1939 took on the character of an open struggle against the regime. They also voiced a demand for an increase in workers' wages commensurate with the increase in food prices, which had risen on average by between twenty and fifty per cent. The demand for a wage increase was altogether justified and necessary in view of the rapid and continual increase in the cost of living.

The removal of opportunists from the trades unions in Skopje and in certain other Macedonian towns helped fan and direct the flames of the workers' economic and political struggles. This was due in large measure to the activity of Svetozar Vukmanovich and Sreten Zhuyovich, instructors sent by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. They had come to Skopje with the task of the general training and expansion of the Party organisation. Immediate steps were taken to strengthen and activate Party organisations in Skopje, Kumanovo, Veles, Prilep and Bitola. They carried on their work with new energy and courage despite the arrest and banishment of certain Communists (Bileche and Lepoglava) to concentration camps set up by the pro-Fascist government in December 1939 in order to dismember the Yugoslav workers' anti-Fascist movement.

At this time preparations were also being made for a more extensive regional Party counselling session to be held in Skopje in February 1940. At this session a detailed analysis was made of the overall situation and activity of the Party's organisation in Macedonia. Those who took part examined and adopted measures for the organisation of the Regional Committee and for a general strengthening and expansion of the organisation. The Party's in-

tensified activity, influence and rôle were notably felt in the great wave of strikes, the 1940 Ilinden (St. Elias' Day) demonstrations and in the large-scale distribution of leaflets and other illegal Party propaganda material throughout Macedonia.

Publication of the 'Bulletin' (Билтен), the temporary mouthpiece of the Party's leadership in Macedonia, began in Skopje in the summer of 1940. It carried proclamations and announcements from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, directives, political and economic reviews, news of strike, tariff and other actions, historical articles and commentaries.

The celebrations of the Ilinden (St. Elias' Day) Uprising and the accompanying demonstrations in Prilep and Ohrid on 2nd August 1940 illustrated not merely the organisational ability and influence of the Communists vis-a-vis the masses but also the enormous strength which lay concealed within the Macedonian national movement. Several thousand townspeople took part in the Prilep demonstrations which involved clashes with the civil and Military police.

The Ohrid demonstrations were organised by progressive Macedonian and other Yugoslav students who were then staying in the students' vacation colony. The leading rôle was played by Mirché Atsev who was arrested together with several other students. On the same day the anniversary of the Ilinden (St. Elias' Day) Uprising was also celebrated with outings and performances in Skopje, Veles and other Macedonian towns.

The Regional Party Conference, held in Skopje in 1940, carried out an examination and evaluation of the experience gained, the successes achieved and the weaknesses revealed in the recent work of the Party organisation. A significant part of the discussion was devoted to the national question. The Conference confirmed the election of the new Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia which consisted of Metodi Shatorov, Petar Ivanovski, Dobrivoye Vidich and Kotse Stoyanovski. It also chose six delegates to the Fifth Countrywide Conference of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

The Fifth Countrywide Conference was held in the neighbourhood of Zagreb from 19th to 23rd October 1940. According to the number of delegates and the importance of the resolutions adopted this Conference had the significance of a Congress and played an extremely important rôle in the forthcoming growth of the Party and in the universal upsurge of the revolutionary movement in Yugoslavia.

In connection with the Macedonian people's aspirations towards national freedom and equality the Conference adopted a resolution stating the need for a struggle for the Macedonian people's equality and self-determination in the face of oppression by

the Serbian bourgeoisie and at the same time for persistent exposure of the Italian and Bulgarian imperialists and their agents.

### *Workers' Economic Struggle in 1940*

The workers were badly hit by the unhalting rise in the cost of living and began to engage in strikes and other actions in order to defend their fundamental economic rights. Poorly paid workers who were working shifts of nine hours or more in the Vardar textile mill in Skopje came out on a thirteen-day strike in May 1940. In the same month workers in the Skopje carpet factory went on strike and succeeded in obtaining a six per cent wage rise, recognition of the U.R.S. trades union organisation and the right to elect workers' representatives. Following a successful strike that same month the slipper manufacturers concluded a collective agreement by which they won a wage increase, a reduction in hours of work, recognition of the U.R.S. trade union organisation and the right to celebrate May Day.

The strikes carried on by the metal workers of Macedonia were particularly persistent and long-lasting. The strike in the Papa Teodosi metal works in Skopje started on 13th September 1940. It lasted for fifty days and resulted in complete success as far as the workers were concerned. Metal workers in the Ruchigay works came out on strike on 20th September. At the same time there was a strike of tailoring workers in Skopje which was in large measure organised by Orise Nikolov. The collective agreement which they obtained was published in 'Our Word' (Наша реч) and served as a model for workers in different trades throughout Macedonia who were either engaged in or contemplating strike and tariff actions. At this time woodworkers in Skopje and Prilep engaged in successful strikes and obtained a thirty per cent wage increase and a reduction in working hours. Shoemakers in Kavadarci came out on strike but, because of the poor organisation of the strike, did not succeed in having their demands met. Considerable persistence was shown by the barbers and hairdressers who made demands for an increase in income for workers of all categories, for the abolition of overtime and for paid annual holidays.

As well as actions undertaken by workers organised into trades unions, spontaneous strikes occurred in Macedonia in places where there were no U.R.S. trades unions or Party organisations. The strikes in September 1940 of workers engaged in the drainage of the Mavrovo and Strumitsa plains were examples of this sort. After brief stoppages of work the men obtained a pay increase and an improvement in their working conditions. The carpenters of Skopje were also active at this time: their representatives signed a col-

lective agreement with their employers which gave them a twenty-five per cent pay increase, a reduction of hours of work from ten to eight, recognition of the workers' right to form trades unions, a fifty per cent supplementary rate for overtime and improved hygienic and technical working conditions.

The strengthening of proletarian solidarity was particularly evident in the strike waged by workers at the Balkan Flour Mill in Skopje. As members of the U.R.S. trades union they approached their employers with a proposed collective agreement. Intervention on the part of the authorities, however, caused these preliminary talks to be unsuccessful and the workers came out on strike. In the course of this strike workers in other similar firms in Skopje expressed their solidarity by coming to the aid of the Balkan Flour Mill strikers and handing over their entire wages to them.

Low wages and long working hours were the cause of the action undertaken by the Prilep millers. Towards the end of 1940 they carried on successful talks with their employers and secured both a pay increase and a reduction in their hours of work. The action of the Prilep brewery workers was equally successful: they obtained a reduction of hours of work from ten to eight, a pay increase and the payment of a fifty per cent supplement for overtime. The strikes of the tobacco monopoly workers and tobacco producers in Prilep were similarly organised.

Strikes on the part of Macedonian pottery workers also resulted in success. The three-day strike of Skopje pottery workers gained them a sixty per cent pay rise, the introduction of an eight-hour working day and the right to elect workers' representatives and to celebrate Labour Day, 1st May. The strike waged by workers at the Vila Zora pottery in Veles was successful and resulted in an improvement in their working conditions.

In September 1940 several hundred workers took part in the action of the Skopje carpenters whose aim was the achievement of a collective agreement. In October of the same year workers at the Prevalets quarry near Veles, who were exposed to continual dangers in addition to excessive exploitation and maltreatment in various forms, came out on strike.

The large number of strikes and other actions and the workers' mass participation in them were an expression of the increasing commitment of the working class to safeguarding and improving their basic rights and interests. In virtually all instances the Communist Party directly inspired and organised these strikes and tariff actions and the other forms taken by the economic and political struggle. The reactionary government was well aware of the important rôle of the U.R.S. trades unions in the workers' class struggle. On the night of 30th to 31st December 1940 it disbanded and proscribed the U.R.S. and confiscated its property. The dis-



banding of the U.R.S. led, in Macedonia as elsewhere, to the workers' loss of an important bastion in their struggle.

*Fascist Aggression against  
Yugoslavia and the  
Partition of Macedonia*

In January 1941 the anti-popular Tsvetkovich-Machek government set up special military concentration camps in order to strangle the militant democratic movements of the workers and nationally subjugated masses. These movements were experiencing an increasingly extensive upsurge and were assuming a revolutionary character. This move on the government's part was a step towards making the country fascist. A large number of Communists, progressives, various opponents of the regime and those who were deemed 'doubtful elements' were conscripted into what were called 'working battalions' purportedly to take part in 'military exercises'. In the camp near Ivanyitsa where, after mobilisation, they were despatched to forced labour there were Montenegrans, Bosnians and some two hundred Macedonians. Despite the fact that the police picked out primarily leading Communists and sent them to military concentration camps they were unable to dismember the Party organisation in Macedonia. By means of help and funds from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia a printing press was obtained and taken to Skopje. On this press was printed, in the Macedonian language, the news-sheet 'Spark' (Искра), the illegal organ of the Regional Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party in Macedonia. The first issue appeared in January 1941.

Once Bulgaria had joined the Triple Pact and German troops had entered Bulgaria on 1st March 1941, Hitler's Germany exerted various forms of pressure and made a number of promises in order to entice Yugoslavia into the Triple Pact. The government and the leaders of the Serbian bourgeois opposition parties, M. Grol, M. Trifunovich and P. Zhivkovich, agreed that Yugoslavia should join the Pact. Consequently, on 25th March 1941, the President of the Yugoslav Government, Dragisha Tsvetkovich and the Foreign Minister, Tsintsar Markovich, signed a treaty whereby Yugoslavia joined the Triple Pact.

A widespread movement of the popular masses against Yugoslavia's joining the Triple Pact and being yoked to the wagon of the German and Italian fascist aggressors immediately broke out in an eruption of demonstrations on 25th and 26th March. This movement affected and spread throughout the whole of Macedonia. Young people and high school students came out on to the

streets of Skopje demonstrating against the treacherous government and the Triple Pact. On March 27th these demonstrations assumed a mass character. The demonstrators hailed the toppling of the traitorous Tsvetkovich government by members of the putsch centred on General Dushan Simovich and sought a rejection of the Triple Pact. Further, they sought the formation of a popular government which would realise the principal democratic, national and social demands of the masses and would adopt a policy that would safeguard Yugoslavia's independence with the support of the Soviet Union. The newly formed government headed by General Simovich did not, however, provide any sort of guarantee that it would follow such a policy. The traitorous capitulators Machek and Kulovats remained as members of this new government which was representative of bourgeois currents more concerned with their own narrow class interests than with the organisation of an effective defence of the country and resistance to fascist aggression. The treacherous aggression against Yugoslavia by German and Italian fascist troops on 6th April 1941 was accompanied by intimidation in the form of bombardments of Belgrade and other Yugoslav towns and cities, including Skopje. On 7th April Veles was bombarded and it was not long before German occupying units entered Macedonia. The Italians were at first forced to withdraw behind the Albanian-Yugoslav frontier. In the course of this short-lived war in Yugoslavia the corrupt nature of the bourgeois-monarchist Yugoslav state and the disposition towards capitulation of its political and military leaders were clearly shown. An unconditional surrender was signed on 17th April 1941 whereupon Yugoslavia ceased to exist as a state within its former frontiers. Its territory was occupied, partitioned and allotted to Germany and Italy and their allies.

The partition of Macedonia in April 1941 was carried out in accordance with Hitler's determination to split up and annihilate the Yugoslav state completely. The putsch and the fall of the Tsvetkovich government had soured Hitler's hopes of yoking Yugoslavia to the Axis. To free their own troops for the advance upon Greece, the Germans allowed 'the participation of Bulgarian divisions in Southern Yugoslavia'. This fact did not, however, prevent the Bulgarian rulers from noising abroad, through the press and radio, through the so-called Macedonian Committee in Sofia and in the Popular Assembly, propaganda emphasising the rectitude of their demands that Macedonia should be incorporated into the Bulgarian state.



## CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC LIFE IN VARDAR MACEDONIA BETWEEN THE TWO WORLD WARS

### *Press*

The refusal of the Greater Serbian hegemonist regime to recognise the Macedonian people's national individuality and culture and its persecution of the name of Macedonia and the language of its people were the main reasons why in comparison with the other lands and regions of pre-war Yugoslavia, Vardar Macedonia was left without a developed press. Extremely harsh measures were taken to render the publication of newspapers or periodicals of any sort in the Macedonian language impossible.

1919 saw the start of the publication in Vardar Macedonian of newspapers in the Serbian language which were designed to impose and strengthen the rule of the capitalist monarchy and to further denationalise and assimilate the Macedonian people. Among the first such newspapers were 'Old Serbia' (Стара Србија) and 'The Economic Herald' (Привредни гласник) both published in Skopje. The newspaper 'Old Serbia', which represented the views of the Radical Party, appeared for ten years, latterly altering its title to that of 'Our Old Serbia' (Наша Стара Србија). It was also during this period that the 'Skopje Herald' (Скопски гласник) first appeared.

The Democratic Party, the second largest Serbian bourgeois party, founded the paper 'Democrat' (Демократ) in 1920 as the organ of the party's Skopje branch. This paper came out regularly for about a year and later appeared periodically during election campaigns under the title of 'The People's Will' (Народна воља). In 1920 'The Southern Star' (Јужна звезда) began to appear weekly in Bitola and managed to survive for several years.

On 7th and 8th January 1920 the Skopje District Conference of the Socialist Workers' Party of Yugoslavia (Communist) passed a resolution to resume publishing 'Socialist Dawn' (Социјалистичка зора) as the organ of the regional Party leadership for Macedonia and Old (South) Serbia. 'Socialist Dawn' reappeared on 1st February 1920, at first coming out twice weekly and later, in connection with the district and parliamentary election campaigns, daily except on Sundays. The requirements of Party agitation and propaganda led to the publication of this paper in a Turkish as well as a Serbian edition.

When the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was banned and Communist clubs and editorial offices closed down as a result of the Edict (Obznana), 'Socialist Dawn' ceased to appear. An at-

tempt to revive it was made in 1923 when the newspaper 'Workers Dawn' (Радничка зора) appeared as the organ of the Skopje branch of the Independent Workers' Party of Yugoslavia. However, the paper's very first number was seized and its further printing and distribution prohibited.

Such bans and persecution of the Communist press by the police led to the appearance of illegal newspapers in Vardar Macedonia at this time. Significant in this respect was the duplicated news-sheet 'Spark' (Искра), the organ of the Veles branch of the Party, which was printed in Macedonian, that is to say in the vernacular of the Veles district. This paper came out in 1922 and 1923 and was distributed not only in Veles but also in Skopje, Kavadarci, Shtip and Prilep.

Apart from the Communist Party newspaper 'Socialist Dawn' which, in order to reach the working masses of Turkish nationality, appeared in a Turkish edition as well, in Skopje in 1921 certain newspapers were printed exclusively in the languages of the Turkish and Albanian nationalities. Such were the papers 'Truth' (Hak) and 'Leader' (Rehber) which appeared that year in Skopje.

As well as the newspapers with definite political orientations which represented the various political currents, there appeared in Skopje at this time the newspaper 'Freedom' (Слобода). This venal boulevard paper soon failed, leaving only bad memories and traces. In Skopje in 1921 the paper 'Agricultural Worker' (Земљорадник) was founded as 'the newspaper of the agricultural workers of the new southern regions'. Its purpose was to aid the implementation of the regime's policy of agrarian reform and colonisation in Macedonia. Later, in 1924, publication commenced of the 'Southern Economist' (Јужни привредник), a weekly concerned in large measure with economic questions. Until late 1925 there also appeared in Skopje the paper 'Homeland' (Завичај), intended mainly for children. Another similar paper 'Sober Children' (Трезвена деца) was also published in Skopje at this time.

In 1925 Vardar Macedonia was supplied with a new daily news paper 'Vardar', representing the official policy of the rulers but, because of material difficulties, it ceased to appear in 1926.

In 1927 and 1928 the Turkish language paper 'Light' (Işık) appeared in Skopje. This paper was the tool of the two largest Serbian bourgeois parties, the Radicals and the Democrats, which were in power alternately. 'The People's Voice' (Sadai millet), which came out in the Turkish language twice a week was a newspaper which gave express support to the regime.

In 1929 the 'Skopje Herald' (Скопски гласник) appeared as the weekly organ of the Skopje district.

A newspaper entitled 'Vardar' appeared once more in Skopje in May 1932. At first this came out weekly, then two or three times a week and ultimately daily. It was edited by Milan Stoimirovich – Yovanovich, who was in close contact with the ruling circles and who, with the financial backing of the Vardar Regional District, made the paper a mouthpiece for the regime. After a life of five years during which it had failed to strike root in Macedonia the paper ceased publication.

The authorities assisted in the founding and publishing of local pro-regime papers in other Macedonian towns as well in order to extend their influence. Particularly characteristic among these was the weekly 'Polog Voice' (Глас Полога) which appeared in Tetovo from 1933 to 1937. It was limited in the main to the treatment of local matters seen through the prism of the interests of the antipopular administration of the day.

In 1933 the monthly children's newspaper 'Little Vardar' (Вардарче) appeared in Skopje at the same time as the humorous paper 'Skopje Noose' (Скопско врдало) – 'the paper of serious jokes' – which, from its third number onwards, was simply called 'Noose' (Врдало).

It was also in 1933 that the newspaper 'Spark' (Искра) began to be published in Skopje as the weekly organ of the District Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party. Kosta Solev-Ratsin and Nikola Orovchanets, Party functionaries of the day, were among those involved in its publication. As a result of the raid which took place early in 1934 this paper ceased to appear.

The place left by the cessation of 'Spark' was filled in the second half of 1934 by the qually short-lived illegal organ of the Party leadership in Macedonia the 'Bulletin' (Билтен) which was later known as the 'Communist Bulletin' (Комунистички билтен).

In Tetovo a second newspaper, the 'Tetovo News' (Тетовске новине) appeared in 1934. It was local in character and occasionally published critical articles. Not long afterwards, in 1936, there appeared in Skopje the weekly 'People's Concord' (Народна слога), which lasted for two years. It was styled an 'independent economic and cultural newspaper'. A similar paper was published in Bitola in 1937. That same year a newspaper in Turkish, entitled 'The True Way' (Dogru yol), published by the Moslem Imam Organisation, appeared in Skopje.

The paper 'Our Home' (Наш дом) which expressed the attitudes of the opposition and contained critical writing on current questions appeared in Skopje from 1938 to 1940.

The founding of the newspaper 'Our Word' (Наша реч), the first number of which came out in Skopje on 25th February 1939, provided Yugoslav part of Macedonia with an influential tribune putting forward the progressive social and national interests and

aspirations of Macedonians, Turks and Albanians. This paper was in fact organised and directed by the Regional Committee for Macedonia of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia.

The illegal organ of the Macedonian Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, the 'Bulletin' (Билтен), which appeared in 1940, included in its brief the acknowledgement of the existence of a Macedonian nation. This paper appeared monthly and carried texts in both Serbian and Macedonian. It was at this time that the illegal 'Young People's Bulletin' (Билтен на младите) was also published and distributed.

From the autumn of 1940 until the fall of pre-war Yugoslavia, in April 1941, the daily newspaper 'The Voice of the South' (Глас југа) was published in Skopje. The beginning of 1941 was marked by intensified political action on the part of the progressive elements in Macedonia. In January 1941 the first issue in the Macedonian language of 'Spark' (Искра), the illegal organ of the Macedonian Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia, appeared.

During the pre-war period in Yugoslavia a number of periodicals were published in Skopje. The best known was the 'Herald of the Skopje Scientific Society' (Гласник скопског научног друштва). Starting in 1925 the 'Herald' appeared annually and contained articles by members of staff of the Skopje Faculty of Philosophy and of Belgrade University.

A similar journal 'of science and culture' began publication in Skopje in 1927 under the title of the 'Southern Review' (Јужни преглед). The annual 'Almanac of the Skopje Faculty of Philosophy' (Годишњак скопског филозофског факултета), containing articles by members of the Faculty staff, was published from 1933 to 1940.

In 1933 and 1934 a group of progressive teachers brought out the bi-monthly 'pedagogic and social journal' called 'Teachers' Movement' (Учителски покрет). Because of its critical attitude towards current phenomena and problems this journal was, however, banned by the police. From mid-1937 the journal 'Torch' (Луч) on which a considerable number of Macedonian intellectuals collaborated was published in Skopje. The efforts of particular authors to examine important Macedonian cultural, economic and social questions objectively and scientifically were quite clear.

Among the progressive periodicals in this period was 'The Economy of Our South' (Пољопривреда нашег југа) which came out monthly in Skopje in 1938.

With a few exceptions the newspapers and periodicals published in Yugoslav part of Macedonia up to the time of the fascist occupation were transmitters of the Greater Serbian hegemonist

bourgeoisie's policy of depriving the Macedonian people of their national character and of assimilating them.

The newspapers in Turkish and Albanian were few in number and relatively short-lived. The aim in publishing them was to separate the Turkish and Albanian nationalities from the Macedonian people and thus facilitate exploitation and national oppression by the capitalist administrators.

### *Literature*

Between the two World Wars literary activity in Yugoslav part of Macedonia was considerably hampered by the negation and strangling of the essential elements and forms of Macedonian national culture by the hegemonist rulers of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. Despite the absence of newspapers and periodicals in the Macedonian language, of a national political centre and of other favourable conditions a certain amount of creative activity did develop, drawing its support from the heritage of nineteenth century works and traditions and from attempts to introduce and use the Macedonian vernacular in literature. In Vardar Macedonia the aspirations of Macedonians towards the creation of a literary language of their own led to significant achievements in the third and fourth decades of the present century. Macedonian writers of the time, especially poets, made abundant use of the language and expressions of folk poetry. Some undertook a deeper study in order to throw light upon the question of a Macedonian literary language. Kocho Solev-Ratsin undoubtedly went farthest in this respect and was to develop into the major figure in Macedonian literature of the period.

Kocho Ratsin (1908-1941) was born into the family of a poor tradesman in Veles and had already in his early years joined the ranks of the workers' movement and the Communist Party of Yugoslavia. Later he became a distinguished Party functionary and one of the editors of its organ, the newspaper 'Spark' (Искра). Frequently arrested and interned, he spent several years as a political prisoner in Sremska Mitrovitsa.

Ratsin's earliest literary works were poems written and published in Serbian between 1928 and 1934. Most of these poems were published in progressive Yugoslav magazines, such as 'Criticism' (Критика), 'Literature' (Литература) and 'Our Reality' (Наша стварност) and some of them in separate collections, such as the anthology '1932'. The works from this period belong in theme and character to the category of social poetry. Ratsin's social poems were something altogether new in Macedonian literature and he became the first express representative of this genre in Vardar Ma-

cedonia. In these poems he described the hard life and sufferings of the Macedonian working man and the social de-classing and impoverishment of the population.

In the course of his stormy but fruitful life Ratsin only succeeded in publishing a single collection of poems in Macedonian, 'White Dawns' (Бели мурги), which was printed illegally in Samobor in Croatia in 1939. With 'White Dawns' Ratsin achieved the loftiest range of his literary output. The poems of this collection are infused with a genuine sympathy for the hardships of oppressed and exploited workers – hired labourers, economic migrants, tobacco workers, poor peasants and ruined craftsmen – and also with revolutionary ardour and a faith in a shining, more fortunate future which the hitherto slave to 'black toil' would bring and build. The collection is a superbly successful testimony to the justified demands for and aspirations towards the affirmation of the Macedonian language and Macedonian national culture.

In those pre-war years Ratsin's varied and intensive literary and intellectual activity took the form of a treatment of the Macedonian people's bitter social and national problems. Some of his works remained in manuscript form while others were confiscated and destroyed by the police. This was the fate of the major part of Ratsin's novel 'Opium Poppy' (Афион) of which only some fragments have been preserved. Ratsin also wrote a study on the Dragovit Bogomils which was clandestinely circulated, began an extensive treatise on the Macedonian national question and wrote works dealing with other important cultural, historical and current social questions. With his entire creative opus Ratsin occupies the position of founder of modern Macedonian literature.

At the time when Ratsin's literary activity was at its zenith another star began to shine in Macedonian poetry. This was Kole Nedelkovski who published two books of poetry: 'Lightning' (М'скавици) in 1940 and 'On Foot through the World' (Пеш по светот) in 1941. In the former the strong influence of folk poetry on this author can be felt. He shows the hardships and deprivation of rights of his people and their sacrifices, militant movements and traditions. The epic poem 'On Foot through the World' is a reminiscence of the part played by the Macedonian people in the past and of their great historical figures. The poems of 1941 were inspired by current events and foreshadowed the decisive turning-point in the Macedonian people's struggle against the forces of darkness and bondage. Kole Nedelkovski himself was to be found in the front ranks in this struggle and died heroically on 2nd September 1941 as an active participant in the vanguard of the anti-fascist movement.

National and social concerns are the warp running through the poetry written in this period by Venko Markovski (b. 1915). In

the relatively short period of time from 1938 to 1941 he published several collections of verse and some longer poems: 'Folk Stalactites' (Народни бигори), 'The Fire' (Огнот), 'Cradle Song' (Лулкини песни), 'Gotsé', 'Ilinden', 'Wonderful is Macedonia' (Чудна е Македонија), and 'Twelve is Striking' (Бие дванаесет). Traces of the influence of Macedonian folk poetry are very strongly evident in Markovski's works.

Dramatic literature developed successfully in the period between the two World Wars. Writing in this genre was characterised by elements from folklore, by its confrontation of matters of social concern and by its use of the mother tongue. The plays exercised a strong positive influence upon the strengthening of the national and political self-confidence of the broad masses of the Macedonian population.

Vasil Ilyoski (b.1902) was the first to become actively engaged in writing plays in Vardar Macedonia. His comedy 'The Runaway' (Бегалка) – or 'Lenche from Kumanovo' (Ленче Кумановче) was staged in Skopje as early as the 1927/28 season of plays. Ilyoski later wrote the comedy 'Theodosius the Rich Merchant' (Чорбаџи Теодос), which at its first performance bore the title 'He Trod on Man' (Нагазил човекот). Ilyoski's comedies uncover and hold up to ridicule conservative attitudes and social prejudices.

Anton Panov (1905-1965) was the author of the popular play 'Economic Emigrants' (Печалбари) in which the tragic fate of the young Kostadin stands for all the hardship of the life of economic emigration which was forced upon the impoverished inhabitants of the passive regions of Macedonia.

Risto Krle (1900-1975) wrote plays on the themes of economic emigration, of the activity of foreign powers in Macedonia and of the economic ruination of the craftsmen. Matters of social concern are given particularly emphatic treatment in his play 'Millions of Martyrs' (Милиони маченици). Krle also wrote two further plays: 'Money is a Killer' (Парите се отепувачка), in 1938, and 'Antitsa', in 1940.

Performances of plays by these authors served to create a new theatre audience drawn from the ranks of the masses to whom they were close because of language and contents: essentially popular and important social events. The plays were written and acted in the dialects of the Kumanovo, Skopje, Galichnik and Struga districts. They were presented on the stage of the Skopje theatre and then performed in the interior by groups of travelling players, such as those of Petre Prlichko and Dimche Traykovski, or by

amateur groups. In many cases the amateur groups were formed and managed by progressive Macedonian students. Through performances of works by Macedonian and other authors they assisted in spreading dramatic art and in raising and activating the people of Macedonia nationally, politically and culturally.

### *Music*

During the period of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes conditions were not favourable to cultural and artistic activity in Macedonia. Young people, however, did take an active part in events in this field. This activity was a continuation of earlier traditions and at the same time part of a movement aspiring towards emancipation. The contribution of choirs and musical societies to the spreading of musical culture was of particular significance. These were established in such places as Skopje, Bitola, Veles, Shtip, Kumanovo, Tetovo and Gostivar. The Vardar, Kosta Abrashevich, Obilich and Gusle Choirs were active in Skopje. In Bitola there were the Kosta Abrashevich, Kaymakchalan and Stevan Mokanyats Choirs. Tetovo possessed the Binichki, Kiril Peychinovich and Bratstvo (Brotherhood) Choirs. In Prilep, in addition to the town's Vocal Society, the Students' Academic Choir was formed in 1937.

It was in the third decade of the present century that ensembles for the performance of more complex musical works were established. Solo performances were given by musicians and singers and there were also concerts by chamber groups and larger orchestras. Vasil Dzhakonovski-Shpato and Vlado Petrov were among those who gave recitals in the larger halls in Skopje and in the interior. In the course of twenty years' activity Vasil Dzhakonovski was instrumental in creating a considerable number of orchestras and a formative influence in the development of many solo musicians. The better known orchestral groups in the interior were the orchestra of the Gorski Sports Club in Veles (f.1925) and the Tetovo Mandolin Quintet.

The first symphony concerts were given at this time in Skopje, Bitola, Shtip and Debar by military musicians. In terms of quality of performance the concerts in Skopje conducted by musicians of Czech origin, Leopold Dvorak, Vaclav Nedela and Vaclav Maly, were particularly noteworthy.

Musical activity on the stage was also developing at this time. As well as the incidental music in works such as 'Koshtana', 'Zona Zamfirova', 'Lenche from Kumanovo' (Ленче Кумановче) and 'Economic Emigrants' (Печалбари), popular operettas such as 'Fair Helen' (Убава Елена), 'Mamselle Nitush', 'Geisha', 'Polish

Blood' and 'Three Maids' (Три девојчиња) began to be staged in Skopje. The operas 'Cavalleria Rusticana' and 'Rigoletto' were given their first performances in Skopje with the combined forces of the military symphony orchestra, the civic choirs and soloists.

Shtip too became the scene of a quite highly developed musical life at this time, thanks in large measure to the activity of Sergei Mihailov.

The founding of the Stevan Mokranjats School of Music in Skopje in 1934 provided a venue for the education of qualified musical personnel. Performances by the school's chamber symphony orchestra and the Skopje String Quartet achieved considerable success.

Round about 1930 there appeared the first compositions by Macedonians belonging to the first generation of professionally educated musicians in Vardar Macedonia. In 1929 Stevan Gaydov published his collection 'Folk Songs' and in 1934 he followed this up with a second collection and a composition for string quartet. In 1933 Zhivko Firfov published his choral songs 'Drotar' and 'Boryano'. Trayko Prokopiev made his debut as a composer in 1934. His best known works from the period before the Second World War are 'Open the little window, Katy' (Отвори го Кате, пенџерото) 'Kumanovka I' and 'Izhe heruvimi'.

Todor Skalovski's Trio was performed in Belgrade in 1935. The following year in Skopje and in other places Petar Bogdanov's song 'The Smith' (Ковач), the first of its kind by a Macedonian composer, was performed. Bogdanov soon followed this with his compositions 'Macedonian Humoresque' and Rhapsody No. 1. Panché Peshev began composing while still a student of music with 'Green Ear' (Класје зелено), with its expressly anti-fascist intonation.

The Vardar Cultural and Artistic Group, composed of Macedonian students at Zagreb, made a considerable contribution to the spread of musical culture throughout Macedonia. The Vardar Society toured Macedonia, giving concerts in Kumanovo, Skopje Veles, Shtip and Radovich. Their visits to these towns also afforded an opportunity for national and political agitation and the setting up of branches of the M.P.M. (МАНАПО) anti-fascist movement. It was for this reason that the Strumitsa police banned any further concerts by the Vardar Society.

Macedonian students either took part in choirs and orchestras or set them up in their home towns, assisting in the organisation of various musical and other cultural and artistic performances in the towns of Macedonia.

## *Growth of Painting*

In addition to the general circumstances which have been mentioned already two main factors influenced the spread of painting in Macedonia in the inter-War period: on the one hand the attempts by the creative progressive forces to maintain a continuity in the national and cultural evolution of Macedonia; and on the other the reactionary efforts made by the regime to halt and redirect the building up of Macedonian individuality.

The Yefimiya Society of the Friends of Art was founded in Skopje with the aim of stimulating the arts in general. This led to an increase in exhibitions where individual painters or groups belonging to the first academically trained generation of Macedonian painters showed their works.

In contrast to the last of the icon painters, Dimitar Andonov Papradishki and Gyorgyi Yakov Zografski, who had been trained in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century, the Macedonian painters of the fourth decade of the twentieth century received their artistic education in the Balkan centres of Sofia, Bucharest and Belgrade. In the period of the Yugoslav Kingdom these last icon painters and the new, modern painters with an academic education were working side by side.

Dimitar Avramovski Pandilov (1898-1963) came from the well-known family of icon-painters, the Dichovtsi. A graduate of the Academy of Art in Sofia, he went to Montpelier and Paris to undertake further studies. In 1927, immediately upon his return to Skopje, Pandilov staged a one-man show of about a hundred drawings and paintings. From this first exhibition to his tragic death in the catastrophic earthquake of 1963 in Skopje, he remained consistent in his painting; his subjects were principally landscapes and scenes from rural life. His works, mostly in oils or watercolours, are characterised by an impressionistic approach and by their subtle harmonies. In addition to being a painter who made an unquestionable contribution to the modernisation of Macedonian art Pandilov was also a distinguished teacher who helped to form a large number of young Macedonian painters.

Lazar Lichenoski (1901-1964) was born in Galichnik and, like Pandilov, came from a family of icon-painters. He learned to draw from his father, who was a woodcarver, and went to Belgrade to receive his formal education. On graduating Lichenoski went to Paris to undertake further study. During his two years there he studied the techniques of fresco-painting and mosaic making and also became well acquainted with modern French painting. On his return to Yugoslavia Lichenovski took up residence in Belgrade and lived there until 1945. Together with other Yugoslav painters he took part in exhibitions held in the Tsviyeta Zuzorich Pavilion. Jo-

ining a group of Belgrade artists who were known as the 'Form' (Облик) group in 1931, he was for many years its secretary. His paintings were shown in the group's exhibitions throughout Yugoslavia and also abroad.

The compositions from Lichenoski's first period show traces of the combined influences of Macedonian religious art and modern French painting. Later he was to concentrate exclusively upon landscape painting, still lifes and the portrayal of characters from his native Galichnik and Macedonia. In a large number of variations on such motifs he employed artistic modelling of an individual sort to create works of lasting value such as 'Outing' (Телеферич), 'Cupboard' (Долап), 'Ohrid Fishermen' (Охридски рибари), 'Sheepfold' (Бачило) and 'Return from the Market' (Враќање од пазар). In these works suggestions of the Macedonian sky, landscape and folklore are to be felt. They successfully continue a tradition, bringing it to bear upon modern currents in painting. Lichenoski also completed a number of successful portraits, thus carrying on the activity of painters such as D. Andonov – Papradishki and G. Y. Zografski. In the road that he followed under the much improved conditions after the Liberation, Lichenoski created numerous works which received a wide acclaim and for which he was given a large number of awards. As a teacher he also assisted in the spreading of an interest in and the practice of art and in creating a trained body of artistic practitioners.

Vangel Kodzhoman (b.1904) attended primary school in his home town of Struga, grammar school in Ohrid and then studied at the Art School in Belgrade. After that he spent a year in Italy where he became acquainted at first hand with the classics of Italian Renaissance painting. From 1929 to 1931 he attended the painting course run by the master M. Milovanovich and from 1931 to 1938 was a teacher at the grammar school in Ohrid. Since the Liberation Kodzhoman has been living in Skopje where he has taught at the Art School and at the Teachers' Training College.

From 1929, when he first took part in the exhibition of Yugoslav painters in Belgrade, Kodzhoman appeared regularly in the exhibitions in the Tsviyeta Zuzorich Pavilion there and, in 1937, 1938 and 1939, in the exhibitions of the 'Independent' Group. In 1938 he put on a one-man show in Skopje of about fifty works, mainly landscapes, genre scenes and portraits incorporating motifs from his native region. In the course of his creative activity he evolved from impressionism to expressionism and created a water-colour style of his own. Thanks to these water-colours and his other painting, the aspect of many Macedonian architectural objects which have fallen prey to the ravages of time had been preserved for future generations.

Tomo Vladimovski (1904-1971) was born in Skopje and first studied painting with Dimitar Andonov Papradishki. Continuing his education at the Belgrade Art School, he graduated in 1935 from the senior academic course in the class of Professors Ly. Ivanovich, M. Milovanovich and I. Radovich. From 1935 to 1937 he undertook further studies in Prague where he first exhibited some of his paintings. In 1937 a one-man show of his landscapes, portraits and water-colours was mounted in his home town. Working as a scene designer in the Skopje theatre, Vladimovski did a great deal to create a new approach and new solutions in scenery design in Macedonia.

Vasilie Popovich Tsitso (1914-1961), together with Tomo Vladimovski, contributed much towards the introduction and development of set design in Vardar Macedonia. Popovich Tsitso was born in Shkodra and moved to Skopje with his parents on the establishment of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes. After completing grammar school in Skopje, he spent a short while as an apprentice in the studio of Nikola Martinoski and then, in 1934, enrolled at the Art School in Belgrade. In that same year he took part in the Spring Exhibition of Yugoslav artists in Belgrade. On graduating from the Art School he returned to Skopje where he worked as a set designer in the theatre.

As well as stage design Popovich Tsitso produced water-colours and caricatures and was to become the first caricaturist in Vardar Macedonia. His caricatures of eminent public figures were published in the Skopje press and at a joint exhibition with Lichenoski and Martinoski in 1940 they gained a wide acclaim, both from the public and from the critics.

Nikola Martinoski (1903-1973) an outstanding pioneer in the creation of contemporary Macedonian painting, was born in Krushevo and received his primary education there. His love of drawing attracted him to the studio-workshop of Dimitar Andonov Papradishki, the icon painter. Here he became acquainted with the painting of icons and of laic motifs.

Martinovski completed his artistic education at the Art College in Bucharest, graduating as top of his class and gaining an award for drawing from the nude. After graduating he travelled to Paris for further study of contemporary French painting and of the works and style of Modigliani in particular. On returning to Skopje in 1929 he had his first one-man show there but did not gain immediate acceptance. Working as a free-lance he continued painting and exhibited annually in Skopje, gradually attracting the attention and respect of the public and of artistic circles. He also took part in the more important exhibitions of the Society of Yugoslav Painters and of the 'Form' (Облик) Society both in Yugos-



lavia and abroad. It was through these exhibitions abroad that Martinoski received his first real recognition.

Martinowski developed into a typical figurative painter, frequently taking people from the streets as subjects for his artistic works. He has felt a particular affinity for gypsy mothers and children, a consistent subject and a motif he is considered to have inherited from Macedonian frescoes and from the icons of Andonov Papradishki. The faces of the poor people in Martinowski's paintings were new to Macedonian painting and marked the introduction of social themes. He is also of significance as one of the founders of modern print-making in Macedonia. His work fuses the traditions of religious painting, masterly realistic draughtsmanship and expressionistic artistic form. In recognition of his work as a painter Nikola Martinowski was one of the first members elected to the Macedonian Academy of Science and the Arts.

#### PIRIN MACEDONIA UP TO THE SEPTEMBER UPRISING OF 1923 IN BULGARIA

##### *Movements and Activities of Macedonians in Bulgaria after the First World War*

At the end of the First World War, in accordance with the 1919 peace treaties which sanctioned the enforced partition of Macedonia already effected, the area of the one-time Serres Sanjak, excepting the town of Serres itself and the Dimir Hisar region, remained within the state of Bulgaria. Administratively this constituted a district and Petrich was made its centre. The territory of this district, consisting of 6,798 sq. kms., was inhabited by a compact Macedonian population of about two hundred and thirty-five thousand.

The frontier which had been set up between Greece and Bulgaria was soon felt to be a serious hindrance to the maintenance of economic links between the towns and villages of Pirin Macedonia and the large producing and consuming centres and the ports of coastal Macedonia. The quantity of agricultural produce, of the products of animal husbandry and of raw materials going to the markets of Salonika, Kavalla and other towns in Northern Greece fell rapidly. The entrepreneurial rôle that these towns played in the exchange which provided the population of Pirin Macedonia with industrial products, staple groceries and other articles of food also diminished.

The general economic exhaustion after the First World War, with its accompanying high prices, speculation and unemployment, also created problems for the Macedonian population in Bulgaria. Streams of emigrants and refugees from towns and villages damaged by the havoc of the war settled in the border areas of Bulgaria to shield themselves from national and political persecution by the Greek rulers. This too contributed to the complication and deterioration of employment and living conditions in Pirin Macedonia.

The simmering discontent of the Macedonian population merged with the considerable disillusionment of the mass of the people in Bulgaria to form a basis congenial to an acceptance of revolutionary and progressive ideas. This process was influenced by the October Socialist Revolution and by demands for national freedom and self-determination. The majority of the leaders of the former Macedonian revolutionary and national liberation movement refused to come to terms with the partition and subjugation of Macedonia by the Balkan bourgeoisies and monarchies. Wishing to carry on the struggle for the national freedom and unification of the Macedonian people, they became active once more and promoted an intensive action to gather the Macedonians together and lead them in a fight against the partition of Macedonia and for the establishment of its integrity.

Among the first such activists were the previous leaders of the Serres Revolutionary District. Immediately after the great imperialist war they publicly and definitively dissociated themselves from the actions of individual factions among Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria. Above all they directed their energies towards paralysing the activity of the Executive Committee of the Macedonian Brothers in Sofia which had been created to serve as a tool for the realisation of the Greater Bulgarian bourgeoisie's hegemonist aspirations and had put forward demands for the incorporation into Bulgaria of the whole of Macedonia.

The activists of the former Serres Revolutionary Organisation rejected any thought of coming to terms with the partition of Macedonia or with Macedonia's incorporation into any of the Balkan states. They made their position clear in a declaration on the resolution of the Macedonian question through the establishment of Macedonia 'within its appropriate geographical boundaries and principally based on Salonika, the Vardar Valley, Skopje and Bitola', with 'a form of government most appropriate to itself, to the nationalities inhabiting it and to the Balkan brothers, created on the model of the Swiss Federation with complete and equal freedom for all the nationalities in respect of education, politics, culture and economy and under the protectorate of the League of Free Democratic Peoples.'

The declaration of the Serres Revolutionary District Organisation stated the concept of an 'autonomous Macedonia with all its own sovereignty' quite unequivocally as it considered that this would 'level the road most easily for the unification and confederation of the Balkan peoples.' The pamphlet 'Back to Autonomy' (Назад кон автономията), published in 1919 by Dimo Hadzhi Dimov, an outstanding leader and ideologist of the Serres Revolutionary Organisation, provided good arguments which clarified and popularised these attitudes and demands.

The historical retrospectives and analyses which served as a logical introduction to the examination of the Macedonian question in the pamphlet 'Back to Autonomy' (Назад кон автономията) were intended to facilitate a confrontation with the essence of the question and with the fundamental aspects and modes of the most positive solution in the given constellation of circumstances. It unmasked most effectively and convincingly the harmful actions and machinations of the supporters and transmitters of the aggressive greater state policies of the Balkan ruling circles, especially of Greater Bulgarian hegemonism, towards Macedonia.

The actualisation of the watchword 'Back to Autonomy' was not merely a reaction to the enforced partition of Macedonia but was also a way of confirming the continuity of the principal aim of the Macedonian people's struggle for true national and constitutional differentiation. Emphasizing that the demand for a single and autonomous Macedonia was the demand of Macedonians in all parts of their homeland, Hadzhi Dimov pointed out that the progressive forces in Bulgaria ought to be directly interested in the creation of an autonomous Macedonia as an equal member of a federation of Balkan republics.

The Macedonians in Bulgaria soon accepted these ideas and aspirations and they became the platform for an extensive new movement. Eminent functionaries in the former I.M.R.O. such as Gyorché Petrov, Dimo Hadzhi Dimov, Petar Pop Arsov, Toshé Delivanov, Rizé Rizov, Mihail Gerdzhikov and Hristo Yankov united in order to make the actions more successful and in 1919 constituted the Temporary Mission of the former United Internal Revolutionary Organisation. Their first aim was to act before the Versailles Conference sat and to win over world public opinion to the idea of the formation of an independent state for the Macedonian people. They declared categorically that they accepted the 'idea of autonomy for Macedonia' as something 'completely independent of the idea of Macedonia's unification with Bulgaria.'

At the beginning of March 1919 the Temporary Mission issued an appeal to Macedonians in Bulgaria. It emphasized that it embraced the aims and demands contained in the Declaration of the Serres Revolutionary Organisation and that it would direct its

efforts towards the creation of an autonomous Macedonia which would be included as an equal member in a future Balkan federation. The Temporary Mission also made moves in the direction of organising branches in those Bulgarian towns and villages where large numbers of Macedonians were living. It also began to publish its own organ, the 'Bulletin' (Билтен), which carried articles by Gyorché Petrov, Dimo Hadzhi Dimov and Hristo Yankov, who were to be its regular contributors.

At public meetings and assemblies the Macedonians demonstrated their unanimous support for the actions and demands and for the measures adopted by the Temporary Mission. Further developments which involved the national and political activation of the masses, especially in Pirin Macedonia, signalled the emergence of a popular movement on a broad front whose aim was the unification and constitutional independence of Macedonia as an autonomous unit within a broader federative community.

The Temporary Mission engaged in considerable activity related to the Paris Peace Conference and sought the safeguarding of the Macedonian people's right to free and democratic national self-determination.

The attractions of Macedonians in Bulgaria into the new movement created and led by the Temporary Mission provoked a swift reaction of opposition from the Greater Bulgarian bourgeoisie and its tools, well-known Supremacist elements. Transmitters of the notion of Greater Bulgarianism, such as Ivan Karandzhulov, Gyorgyi Bazhdarov, Konstantin Stanishev and Nikola Milev, were yoked to the chariot of Greater Bulgarian hegemonism and reaction. As the leaders of the Executive Committee of the Macedonian Brothers in Bulgaria they started a counter-action using various slogans which declared them to be in favour of Macedonia's incorporation into the state of Bulgaria. To this end the Executive Committee sent a special memorandum to the Paris Peace Conference requesting that the victors should allot Macedonia to Bulgaria. The fact that they did not broadcast the memorandum to the Bulgarian public was an obvious proof that its demands were both out of date and unpopular.

Reactionary nationalistic circles in Bulgaria and the Supremacists, their exponents in the ranks of the Macedonian emigrants, continued to speculate, using the name, traditions and programme of the former I.M.R.O. demands for Macedonian autonomy. An 'escape' of prisoners, including the war criminals Todor Aleksandrov and Aleksandar Protogerov, was engineered and they were afforded asylum on Mt. Pirin in order to develop such activity more successfully. Along with Petar Chaulev they declared themselves members of the former Central Committee of the I.M.R.O. and formed a terrorist organisation in the Pirin district. This they cal-

led the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation so as to invest it with authority and gain support for it. At the same time they announced that the achievement of autonomy for Macedonia remained the principal aim of the I.M.R.O.

The left-wing tendencies of the broad masses of the population of Pirin Macedonia and of those parts of Macedonia under Greek and Yugoslav rule were well known to them. They therefore gave themselves the appearance of people who paid heed to the spirit of the age and, in the name of the Central Committee of the I.M.R.O., announced that they did not regard the Bulgarian Communist Party as an antagonistic force since they were aware that a social revolution would involve the national one. Proclamations of this sort most certainly contributed to the attraction into the newly-Formed I.M.R.O. of left-wing oriented Macedonians. The fact that followers of Yané Sandanski, such as Aleksandar Bynov, Gyorgyi Penkov and Alekso Vasilev and other honourable Macedonians, including Lybomir Vesov and Iliya Kushev from Veles, were initially attracted into the autonomist organisation could be seen as an unqualified success.

Once it had established its stronghold in Pirin Macedonia the I.M.R.O. followed the example of the one-time revolutionary organisation of the Macedonian national liberation movement and re-formed the district organisations and the armed bands. While using links and channels inherited from the past the organisation also began to create its own network of accomplices in the areas of both Vardar and Aegean Macedonia.

Setting out from bases in Pirin Macedonia close to the Bulgarian – Yugoslav frontier, armed bands crossed over and were particularly active in the eastern areas of Vardar Macedonia, above all in territory of the Tsarevo selo, Kochani, Shtip, Veles and Skopje districts. Todor Aleksandrov entered the border districts of Vardar Macedonia with some of these bands. Later the bands of Protogerov and Chaulev were to penetrate the western areas of Macedonia. Bands of the autonomist organisation also infiltrated Aegean Macedonia to a lesser extent.

The activity of the armed bands was, however, concentrated principally in Vardar Macedonia where they assassinated such eminent bearers of Greater Serbian rule as police and military commanders and their agents. The members of the bands were predominantly young people while the leaders included such intellectually distinguished figures as Lybomir Vesov and Iliya Kushev. The activities of the bands provoked large-scale and bloody reprisals against the Macedonian population by the rulers in Belgrade and Athens. The bands methods of the terrorisation of individuals did not succeed in kindling a truly popular armed struggle; they were intended to give reputation to the leaders of the I.M.R.O. as

being leaders of the subjugated and divided Macedonian people. This was especially true in the case of Todor Aleksandrov.

The members countries of the Entente turned a deaf ear to the justified petitions of Macedonians to live in and develop a single state unit of their own. The only step taken to ameliorate the effects of the retreat to the new state frontiers was the conclusion of an agreement for the bi-lateral resettlement of population between Greece and Bulgaria. The first such arrangement was the Ney Convention of 27th November 1919 which was supposed to continue in a regulated manner the wave of migration which had gone on unbroken since the Balkan Wars. The Greek rulers combed Northern Greece in order to 'purge' it of Macedonians and to carry out a total Hellenisation of regions in which until that time there had lived a large and compact Macedonian population. The Convention, signed on 9th January 1928 by the Bulgarian Foreign Minister Molov and the Greek Foreign Minister Kafandaris, confirmed the methods by which the property rights of the resettled population would be regulated.

According to the figures of the Joint Greek-Bulgarian Commission on Emigration and of the Bulgarian Chief Directorate for the Settling of Refugees, a total of 86,572 people emigrated from Aegean Macedonia in 1928.

#### *Spread of Communist Influence and Movement of the Macedonian Masses in Bulgaria*

As in the other Balkan states the Macedonians in Bulgaria directed their attention towards the working class revolutionary parties, expecting from them whole-hearted dedication to the safeguarding of the national and social rights of oppressed and exploited masses. This hope found its expression in the elections of the time and in other political struggles in which an increasing number of Macedonians supported the aims and demands of the Communists. The alignment of the mass of the people in Pirin Macedonia with both the programme and the tactics of the Bulgarian Communist Party was demonstrated by the election of three Communist candidates as Deputies in the Bulgarian Popular Assembly at the Parliamentary Elections of 17th August 1919. From the close of the First World War until the September Uprising Communists were elected to the district administrations in many towns and villages throughout Pirin Macedonia. The towns and districts of Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad), Nevrokop, Razlog and Bansko had Communist administrations and in Pirin Macedonia the Communist Party had a larger number of supporters than any other

party. Many successful strikes were carried out in Pirin Macedonia in 1919 and the succeeding years under the leadership of the Communists.

The Bulgarian Communist Party and other progressive forces in the Balkans endeavoured to link the national liberation struggle to the solution of the other important social questions raised by the general revolutionary ferment. These aspirations were in accord with the direction taken by Comintern policy on the national and colonial questions, namely the unification of workers of all nations and countries in a joint revolutionary struggle against capitalism, national aggression and the deprivation of rights.

At the Third Balkan Socialist Conference, held in Sofia in January 1920, a Balkan Communist Federation was formed as a branch of the Comintern whose purpose was to co-ordinate the activities of the Balkan Communist Parties towards the creation of a federation of Balkan and Danubian Republics and so more effectively kindle and direct the struggle. The aim in forming this Federation was to create a 'joint leadership apparatus' in accordance with the Comintern attitude: that is, as a strictly centralised organisation with the Parties as its sections.

The Parties for their part attempted to treat the national and democratic movements in similar fashion. This was illustrated by the attempts of the leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party to subordinate and manage the Temporary Mission of the former I.M.R.O. The attempt made through Dimo Hadzhi Dimov to impose a Communist Platform upon the Temporary Mission and to make it a transmitter of Party policy evidenced a failure to understand both the essence of the national revolution and the progressive nature of the Macedonian national liberation movement. As Gyorché Petrov and other faithful Macedonian national revolutionaries did not agree with a re-formation of the Temporary Mission which would give it such a direction a split soon developed among its leaders. This eventually led to the decline of the mass movement of Macedonians in Bulgaria which had been created and led by the Temporary Mission.

In the first half of 1920 the leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party formed what was called the Emigrants' Communist League (E.C.L.) in order to spread its influence among the ranks of the many emigrants in Bulgaria. The leading personalities in this League were Dimo Hadzhi Dimov, Vasil Glavinov and Ivan Klincharev, all Macedonians and distinguished activists in the socialist and workers' movements. However, the League could neither be equated with nor replace the Macedonian national revolutionary organisation, nor could it become the leader of the Macedonian national revolutionary movement. The newspaper 'Liberation' (Освобождение) which began to appear on 1st May 1920 as

the mouthpiece of the E.C.L., or as the 'organ of the Macedo-Thracian and Dobrujan Communist Groups in Bulgaria' stated that it would aid the consolidation of the ranks of the Bulgarian Communist Party and 'under its leadership and in the name of its programme and demands' would endeavour to contribute to the implanting of 'Communist education, class propaganda and organisation' among the emigrants. 'Liberation' (Освобождение) concluded that 'for the emigrants in Bulgaria, many thousands strong in number but financially weak' there was no 'other flag apart from the Communist flag and no other ideal apart from that of a soviet republic'.

The E.C.L.'s consistent agitation had the positive result of gathering together and linking up in an organised manner the progressive elements among Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria. To this end a Founding Conference of the emigrants' communist groups in Bulgaria was held on 22nd May 1921. Twenty-one delegates attended, representing sixteen groups. The District Secretariat of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia in Skopje was invited to send a delegate. On the basis of the paper submitted by Hristo Kahakchiev, 'The National Question in the Balkans and the Third Communist International', a resolution was passed containing fourteen points which reproduced the attitudes of the Bulgarian Communist Party and the Balkan Communist Federation on the national question. Beginning with an appraisal of the necessity of eliminating the division of Macedonia and eliminating the national oppression of its population, the resolution stated quite precisely that the liberation of Macedonia was to be achieved by the united struggle of the workers' parties and the broad masses in the Balkan countries and through the formation of a Balkan and Sub-Danubian Socialist Federative Republic.

Even after this Founding Conference the Central Emigrants' Commission, led by Dimo Hadzhi Dimov, continued to exist as a transmitter for the Bulgarian Communist Party. Likewise, the newspaper 'Liberation' continued to appear as the mouthpiece of the 'Communist emigrants in Bulgaria', i.e. of the Emigrants' Communist League.

Because of its Communist platform and strategy it was not possible for the E.C.L. to grow into a mass movement of Macedonians in Bulgaria. It remained, therefore, a restricted organisation consisting chiefly of Party members. The gradual deterioration of its links with the broad mass of Macedonians, together with an awareness that the E.C.L. could not fulfil their expectations, were factors which influenced the resolution to disband the Emigrants' Communist League and cease publication of 'Liberation' (Освобождение) which was taken at a session of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party on 5th to 7th August 1923. All

emigrants who were Party members were recommended to join general emigrants' organisations and brotherhoods, to take part in all the more important emigrant activities, to maintain links with the leaders of the Macedonian and other similar organisations and to attempt to sink their differences and avoid conflict.

Some months before the disbanding of the E.C.L. there had appeared a new faction, complete with its own newspaper, among the ranks of the Communist-oriented Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria. This was a group of like-minded Macedonians who had begun to publish the newspaper 'Soviet Macedonia' (Съветска Македония) in Sofia as an 'independent emigrant ideological paper'. The leading personality in this group was Ivan Serafimov Agovski.

The leadership of the Bulgarian Communist Party at once decisively dissociated itself from the 'Soviet Macedonia' newspaper, interpreting its publication as a 'separatist initiative' which might disorient and misdirect the supporters of revolutionary democracy. However, the awareness of the newspaper's supporters of the essence of the Macedonian question and of methods of resolving it in the interests of the working masses, although not altogether new or original, contained specific factors which were a result of the current ferment. They emphasized the links between the Macedonian question and the other Balkan questions and declared that all the Balkan peoples should unite in a joint struggle for soviet rule and for the removal of 'any kind of organisational, ideological or nationalistic separatism among Macedonian emigrants, the Macedonian population and all the peoples of the Balkans'. It was characteristic of the 'Soviet Macedonia' group that it made its point by using the watchword of an independent Macedonia as a soviet republic without linking this to a call for a Balkan or Danubian Federative Soviet Republic.

*Effects of Changes in State  
Politics and of the 1923 September  
Uprising on Macedonians in Bulgaria*

The formation, at the end of the First World War, of a coalition government in Bulgaria in which Aleksandar Stamboliski's Agrarian Party (БЗНС) played a distinguished rôle was a turning point marking a fresh course in Bulgarian state politics. The difficult situation of the masses and their disposition and demands influenced the new Bulgarian rulers towards the implementation of measures of reform in socio-political and economic life. These took on an even more determined character and direction after the great election victory which led to the formation of an indepen-

dent government by the Agrarian Party under the leadership of Stamboliski. Of particular significance was the agrarian reform implemented on the basis of the Law on State Lands of 30th June 1920 and the Law on the Possession of Working Land of 25th June 1921, which contained unqualifiedly progressive anti-capitalist elements. The reform envisaged the expropriation of some 2,250,000 sq. decametres of land from large estate owners and its redistribution to poor and landless peasants and, in accordance with the Law on the Settlement of Refugees, to settled refugees.

Concern for the advancement of the agricultural population through the organisation of rural co-operative movement occupied an important place in the new government's economic policy. Co-operatives involving producers, suppliers and providers of credit increased considerably in number and gained economic strength. In several villages and towns in Pirin Macedonia co-operatives of tobacco producers were set up and also branches of the 'Liberation' (Освобождение) Co-operative which was in Communist hands and bore the same name as the newspaper of the Emigrants' Communist League.

The Agrarian Government and especially its Minister-President Stamboliski made what were very clearly sincere attempts to bring Yugoslavia and Bulgaria closer together. The attitude towards the progressive and revolutionary aspirations of the Macedonian liberation movement was also a benevolent one. As the official Bulgarian Delegate to the Paris Peace Talks Stamboliski had in 1919 declared himself in favour of the creation of a separate Macedonian state.

Stamboliski's outlook on Macedonian individuality and on aspirations towards the constitutional establishment of the Macedonians can be seen clearly in the following recommendation which he made: "Form parliamentary groups in Belgrade, Athens and, if you will, in Sofia. But I would say something more to you. As I am sure that the Petrich district would not be occupied by your neighbours, proclaim a republic there."

This attitude of Stamboliski's played a positive rôle in the growth and successful organisation of the activity of militant Macedonians in Bulgaria. The favourable conditions which obtained during the government of the Agrarian Party (БЗНС) enabled new Macedonian organisations to appear in Bulgaria: the Federative and the Ilinden (St. Elias' Day) Organisations. The Macedonian Federative Organisation soon gained considerable standing and influence, thanks in large part to its capable leadership.

Together with the Federative Organisation there appeared the Ilinden Organisation, which gathered together former activists and participants from the Macedonian national liberation movement. From the very outset this organisation was led by faithful re-

volutionary democrats and left-wing oriented elements. The 'Ilinden' newspaper, which was edited by the progressive journalist Arseni Yovkov and published by the organisation, played a very useful rôle in uniting the supporters of the Macedonian revolutionary movement. The organisation made a considerable contribution to safeguarding and popularising the glorious traditions of the Ilinden Uprising and other militant actions of the Macedonian people and to developing and adapting the fundamental aims of Gotsé Delchev's I.M.R.O. in a manner appropriate to the new situation.

The spread of the activity and influence of these organisations and the left-wing orientation of the Macedonian masses were a cause for considerable concern to Todor Aleksandrov and Aleksandar Protogerov. They thought that they could halt the course of events which were undesirable in their eyes by terrorist methods and to that end ordered the assassination of functionaries of the authorities in Pirin Macedonia and of distinguished Macedonian activists. Aleksandrov's terrorists killed several representatives of the Bulgarian authorities in Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad) and Nevrokop and by means of such base murders got rid of Communist functionaries who, together with the Agririans, opposed the I.M.R.O. Among the victims of I.M.R.O. terrorism was Dr. Kosta Petrov, an eminent Communist activist in Dupnitsa.

The leaders of the Federative Organisation were a thorn in the flesh of Todor Aleksandrov and his group. It was on his orders that the Federalist leader Nikola Yurukov was murdered in Sofia and an attempt made on the life of Todor Panitsa and his supporters in Nevrokop. In Sofia Gyorché Petrov was assassinated on 28th June 1921 on orders from Aleksandrov's group, as was Aleksandar Dimitrov, Minister for Internal Affairs in Stamboliski's government. The Minister for Internal Affairs was assassinated because he had constantly fought against the terrorist activities of Aleksandrov's and Protogerov's I.M.R.O. and against the resurrection of reactionary nationalistic and monarchist aspirations in Bulgaria.

The social reforms introduced by the Agrarian Government and its domestic and foreign policies aroused increasing opposition among the leaders of the bourgeoisie and among certain dark forces at work in the country. The court became a reactionary stronghold and a hatchery of plots against the government; it flirted with the 'autonomist leaders' Aleksandrov and Protogerov. Eventually, on 9th June 1923, a military coup was effected by leaders who were the tools of the court and Stamboliski's Agrarian Government in Bulgaria was overthrown. Despite armed resistance to the coup in certain parts of Bulgaria, the opposition of the workers' and peasants' revolutionary forces was bloodily crushed. It was at this time that certain terrorist units of the 'Autonomist'

I.M.R.O. appeared on the scene. The ex-Premier Aleksandar Stamboliski, a great son of the Bulgarian people, was murdered at the hands of the Skopje armed band leader V. Velyanov - Chicheto.

Todor Aleksandrov made use of the coup to settle accounts with his adversaries in the ranks of the Federalists. The active Socialist and Federalist Kliment Razmov and the leader of the Macedonian students, Petar Taralyamov, were killed by Aleksandrov's terrorists. During this period several representatives of the Agrarian regime and members of the left wing of the I.M.R.O. in Pirin Macedonia were also killed.

The mistaken course which the B.C.P. (Bulgarian Communist Party) had adopted was condemned by the Comintern, which strengthened the Party leadership in order to point the moral and to take measures towards organising an uprising against the reactionary regime of Aleksandar Tsankov. As part of this action the Central Committee of the B.C.P. undertook discussions with the leadership of the I.M.R.O. to ensure that the latter's attitude towards the planned uprising would be neutral at the last. The agreement which was reached contained the following points: 1) that the I.M.R.O. would stand aside when the armed uprising of the workers and peasants, led by the B.C.P., broke out; 2) that the B.C.P. branches in the Petrich district would not take part in the uprising since that was an area in which the I.M.R.O.'s authority was recognised.

This agreement was in effect an acknowledgement of the I.M.R.O. in Pirin Macedonia, a situation not vastly different from that which existed under Tsankov's government. The majority of Communists in Pirin Macedonia neither approved of nor accepted this agreement. When events began to follow a course that was contrary to their wishes the Communist leaders decided to support the uprising in the neighbouring districts and to take limited armed action. Certain results were achieved in the form of an agreement between the District Party Committee in Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad), led by Metodî Aleksiev, and the Party Committee in Dupnitsa on co-ordinated action in the Dupnitsa region during the course of the uprising.

Particularly serious preparations for raising a revolt were undertaken by the Küstendil District Party Committee, thanks in large measure to its Secretary Stanke Dimitrov. The unlooked-for arrest of the Secretary and members of the Committee and of a large number of active Communists on 12th September 1923 (only a few days before the outbreak of the uprising) brought the planned activities to a halt. An action committee which had already been drawn up carried on the preparations, however, and directed its energies towards the organisation and despatch of an armed band of Gorna Dzhumaya Communists, which was intended to join up



with and assist the insurgents in Dupnitsa. As soon as the Uprising began on 23rd September 1923, the detachment, led by Kosta Sandev and Todor Chopov, set out for Dupnitsa. However it was halted by an ambush outside the town and the news of the defeat of the rebellion in Dupnitsa resulted in the return of a section of the detachment's members to Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad). They all suffered the tragic fate of death at the hands of Todor Aleksandrov's tools. The remaining members of the detachment transferred to the Razlog district, where they took part in the struggles of the local insurgents.

In the territory of Pirin Macedonia it was in Razlog and its surroundings that the September Uprising flared up most strongly. On the eve of 23rd September rebel detachments from large number of places in the neighbourhood entered Razlog deployed into three groups. They attacked the barracks, the police station and various administrative buildings. Without offering any serious resistance the officers surrendered and very soon the police and administrative buildings were captured. Thus the insurgents assumed power in Razlog and held it for several hours. Simultaneously a workers' and peasants' revolutionary authority was established and proclaimed in Bansko and the surrounding villages. Although initially the Uprising succeeded in spreading throughout the Razlog district it was not able to survive as an isolated enclave. The September Uprising did not manage to grow into a general uprising.

The rebel actions in these two regions of Pirin Macedonia served the 'autonomist' leaders as a pretext for disregarding the agreement reached by local Communist activists and for ordering treacherous murders and other crimes of violence. The members of the Gorna Dzhumaya District Party Committee were among the first victims of this increased wave of terrorism instigated by the 'autonomists'. Armed bands were despatched by Todor Aleksandrov to the rebellious regions and to other parts of the country where they contributed to the victory of reaction in Bulgaria by carrying out brutal murders and indulging in firing and plunder.

## POSITION AND STRUGGLE OF MACEDONIANS IN PIRIN MACEDONIA UNTIL THE COUP OF MAY 1934

### *New Platform of the Macedonian Liberation Movement*

The bloody means employed to quell the September Uprising brought on a fresh wave of white terrorism in Bulgaria. The reactionary forces were ruthless in settling their accounts with the defeated insurgents and their helpers. A large number of the insurgents were killed in the struggles or fell victim to the maddened mobs of the soldiery, of the police or of bands of terrorists. Others were thrown into prison while many members of the Bulgarian Communist and Agrarian Parties were forced to emigrate to neighbouring countries, predominantly to Yugoslavia. The communist Party of Bulgaria (BKP) and the Bulgarian Agrarian Popular League (BZHC) were outlawed and their members subjected to extremely harsh persecution. Other progressive organisations and activists and their press and publishing activities suffered under the blows of the Tsankov regime. Among these were the Ilinden and the Federative Organisations whose functionaries were increasingly abused by the authorities and their newspapers frequently confiscated.

In token of protest against such an attitude on the part of the new rulers the Ilinden Organisation submitted to the government a memorandum in which it requested that the obstacles put in the way of the social and cultural activities of Macedonians in Bulgaria be removed. The memorandum condemned the Bulgarian government's anti-Macedonian policy and sought a separation of the national and political aims and interests of the Macedonian people from the tendencies of the Bulgarian government. The reactionary rulers, however, made use of the memorandum as yet another excuse for exerting pressure upon progressive Macedonian organisations and individuals.

The waning of the revolution in Bulgaria and in the Balkans generally and the split in the ranks of the Macedonian liberation movement made necessary a fundamental examination of the reasons for these failures. This led to a revision which changed the previous tactics and improved the discovery of means and forms of revolutionary activity appropriate to the new conditions. Inspired by the knowledge thus gained and spurred on by the Balkan Communist Federation, the Macedonian national revolutionary Dimitar Vlahov engaged in intensive activity linking up the various currents and groups among Macedonian emigrants and uni-

ting them with the revolutionary movement. To this end he entered upon discussions with Petar Chaulev, Todor Aleksandrov and Aleksandar Protogerov which concluded successfully with the agreement signed on 24th April 1924 on the unification of the I.M.R.O. and the Macedonian Federative Organisation (A Protocol for the Unification of the Macedonian Revolutionary Movement). The basis of this agreement was formulated and set out in what was known as the Platform Declaration. On 15th May 1924 the May Manifesto, with the signatures of Todor Aleksandrov, Aleksandar Protogerov and Petar Chaulev, was published by the Central Committee of the I.M.R.O.

The May Manifesto pointed to the liberation of the split parts of Macedonia to form "a completely independent political unit" and a democratic re-formation federalising the Balkan peoples into an equal community which would guarantee the "political existence of an independent Macedonia" as a main aim of the revolutionary struggle of the Macedonian people.

The May Manifesto also contained the ideological and political framework for the formation of a separate group of deputies from the three electoral districts of Pirin Macedonia – the Nevrokop, Petrich and Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad) regions – in the Twentieth Popular Assembly of Bulgaria. This group's first move was to draw up a separate Declaration of the Macedonian Parliamentary Group which would set out the views and demands for the settlement of questions vital to the destiny of the Macedonian people.

From the Platform Declaration and the May Manifesto it appeared that Todor Aleksandrov and Aleksandar Protogerov were making a radical change and abdicating from the separatist and autonomist demands with which they had concealed their aspirations towards the incorporation of Macedonia into Bulgaria. But very soon, under pressure from Bulgarian ruling circles and frightened by their own "excessive flight to the left", they both revoked their signatures of the May Manifesto and, in a special statement issued on 1st August 1924, called the former document "a mystification by exultant Communists". Their withdrawal from the agreement and from the May Manifesto was a further mark of their faithful service of the Greater Bulgarian bourgeoisie and the Court.

The contents of the May Manifesto were published in the 'Ilinden' newspaper, the mouthpiece of the Ilinden Organisation. This presentation of The manifesto to the Bulgarian public had an extremely positive effect on the population of Pirin Macedonia and on the broad mass of Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria.

In contrast the Bulgarian government and bourgeoisie saw in it a grave threat to their positions and plans. The Bulgarian rulers

resorted to their old, well-tried means of decimating the Macedonian movement: provocation, bribery, the sowing of discord, terrorism and killings. The rivalry which existed between Aleksandrov and Protogerov for the leading position in the I.M.R.O. was used to inaugurate a general extermination of one another by the members of separate groups among the Macedonian emigrants. Todor Aleksandrov, who was killed in an ambush in Pirin Macedonia on 31st August 1924, was among the first victims of this enflamed mutual destruction. Those responsible for Aleksandrov's murder wished to lay the guilt at the door of the Communists and thus cast the Macedonian activists into a fratricidal war. The total engagement of Ivan (Vanko) Mihailov, Aleksandrov's Private Secretary, who had pretensions towards becoming the unrestricted master of the I.M.R.O., initiated a series of political assassinations of eminent Macedonian activists and of Communist functionaries in Bulgaria. Aleksandar Buynov, Stoyché Hadzhiev, Aleko Vasilev and Gyorgy Penkov, all distinguished members of the Serres revolutionary group, were liquidated and at the same time the Macedonian revolutionaries M. Aleksiev, Gy. Kovachev, Hr. Mendikarov, D. Ikonov, Arsen Yovkov and a large number of other Macedonian and Communist activists lost their lives.

In mid-September 1924 Dimo Hadzhi Dimov, the organiser and ideologist of the left wing of the Macedonian liberation movement, at that time a member of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Communist Party and a representative in the Bulgarian Popular Assembly, was assassinated in Sofia. On the same day and also in Sofia the well-known leader of the Macedonian Federative Organisation, Slavko Kovachev, was murdered. Later Chudomir Kantardzhiev and Gyorgyi Skrizhovski, eminent members of the Macedonian revolutionary movement, were to lose their lives as victims of Vanko Mihailov's terrorism. The killing of faithful Macedonian patriots and revolutionaries and other activists, especially from among the ranks of the Communists, became an everyday event and was most wide-spread in Pirin Macedonia. The executioners also succeeded in carrying out the orders of their central authority outside Bulgaria and sowed death and terror in various European centres. Their bloody account was increased in 1925 by the murders of Todor Panitsa in Vienna, of Petar Chaulev in Milan and of Dr. Rayko Daskalov, a former Minister of the Agrarian Government in Bulgaria, in Prague.

A considerable number of European writers and public figures committed themselves to uncovering the background to these murders. The distinguished French humanist and progressive literary figure, Henri Barbusse, for example, raised his voice in protest against political assassinations of Macedonian revolutionaries of the type of Todor Panitsa. The World League for the Protection of

Human and Civil Rights appealed to the League of Nations to take appropriate measures vis-a-vis the Bulgarian government in order that a stop might be put to I.M.R.O. terrorism. Actions of this sort were not infrequently either instigated or publicised by the newly-formed Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (United). This organisation was established subsequent to the Inaugural Conference held in Vienna in October 1925 and attended by Dimitar Vlahov, Hristo Yankov and V. Poptomov, from the former Emigrants' Communist League in Bulgaria, by Dr. F. Atanasov, P. Shatev and S. Ivanov, representing the Macedonian Federative Group, by G. Zankov, from the Ilinden Organisation, and by R. Rizov, as a representative from Vardar Macedonia.

The constitution and other programme documents produced at the Inaugural Conference stressed that the I.M.R.O. (United) should develop into a widespread movement of Macedonians from the three parts of their split and subjugated fatherland and of all Macedonian emigrants and that its chief aim should be a liberated Macedonia existing within a voluntary and equal federation of the Balkan peoples. It was also underlined that the struggle for an independent Macedonia and a Balkan federation should be closely linked to the revolutionary national liberation movement and the class struggle of the proletariat in all the countries of the Balkans.

The Central Committee of the I.M.R.O. (United) engaged in large-scale publication and agitation in order to popularise its position. By means of the 'Macedonian Task' (Македонско дело) and 'Balkan Federation' (Балканска Федерација) newspapers and other materials which were printed and distributed clandestinely it extended the network of its groups and branches throughout Pirin Macedonia and Bulgaria and in the parts of Macedonia under Yugoslav and Greek rule.

I.M.R.O. (United) pamphlets and other publications (appeals, protests, resolutions and memoranda) found their way into progressive circles not merely in the Balkans but throughout Europe and America.

Following the replacement of Aleksandar Tsankov by Andreya Lyapchev as Minister-President in 1926 the I.M.R.O. (United)'s roots grew stronger both in Pirin Macedonia and in those Bulgarian towns with a large number of Macedonian emigrants. This change was a result of the total compromise of Tsankov's regime of terrorist oppression. The new Democratic Alliance Government aimed to achieve an improvement both in Bulgaria's domestic and foreign political situations.

The stabilisation of the monarchy and the ruling class in Bulgaria and the decline of the wave of revolution among the masses did not prevent the appearance of active I.M.R.O. (United) groups and branches. These were most numerous and most active in Pirin Macedonia where, however, they were also subject to the greatest difficulties and blows from Vancho Mihailov's terrorist bands.

In the following years a group of Aleksandar Protogerov's supporters, led by Petar Shandanov, began to make approaches to the leaders and field organisations of the I.M.R.O. (United). Forced into a confrontation with the wing of the I.M.R.O. led by Mihailov, after Protogerov's murder some eminent pro-Protogerov elements found points of contact with the I.M.R.O. (United) and became advocates of collaboration with it.

On an order from Mihailov, the Secretary of the I.M.R.O. (United) in Bulgaria, Simon Kavrakirov, was kidnapped in 1932 and put to death two years later with a view to do away with the leading figure of the I.M.R.O. (United). In the course of 1932 and 1933 several distinguished I.M.R.O. (United) activists and members of the Macedonian left lost their lives. It was in this period that the assassination took place of the Macedonian revolutionary and Communist Deputy in the Popular Assembly, Alekso Martulkov, who had also been editor of the progressive journal 'Macedonian Banner' (Македонско знаме). Early in 1933 Hristo Traykov, a Macedonian public figure and member of the Parliamentary Communist Group in the Popular Assembly was murdered by paid killers from the pro-Mihailov I.M.R.O. These killings clearly indicated that I.M.R.O. terrorism was primarily directed against I.M.R.O. (United) leaders and active Communists with the aim of destroying their network and decimating the growing Macedonian left.

#### *The Pro-Mihailov I.M.R.O. as a 'State within a State'*

Mihailov and his supporters were not scrupulous about the means they used to strengthen such positions as they had won, and they attempted to make Pirin Macedonia their own stronghold. Employing intimidation, violence and murder they set out to eliminate all who would not fulfil their commands. Before long they had succeeded in imposing their "will and law" upon Pirin Macedonia so that the I.M.R.O. became a virtual state within a state.

Mihailov's I.M.R.O. prevented any political activity in Pirin Macedonia that was not organised by itself. In particular it hindered

red the activities of the B.C.P. (Bulgarian Communist Party) and other progressive elements. Only with considerable difficulty did the bourgeois parties manage to select and put up candidates for the positions of local advisors or popular delegates and even these were generally chosen from the ranks of the I.M.R.O. or from its proven sympathisers among the Macedonian emigrants. The deputies in the Popular Assembly from the electoral districts of Pirin Macedonia formed a separate Macedonian parliamentary group which interpreted the attitude of the I.M.R.O. chiefs led by Mihailov and supported the various Bulgarian governments serving them as a reserve force in their political struggles. This group served as a go-between for the pro-Mihailov I.M.R.O. and such emigrant organisations as the Ilinden Organisation, the Macedonian National Committee of Brotherhoods, the Macedonian Youth League and the Vardar Students' Society. The 'Macedonia' newspaper, the organ of the Macedonian National Committee, became a propaganda mouthpiece for Mihailov's I.M.R.O.

At this time, aided by his emissaries, among whom Yordan Chkatrov was the most eminent, Mihailov achieved a break-through among Macedonian emigrants in North America and founded what was known as the Macedonian Political Organisation (M.P.O.). The founding of the 'Macedonian Tribune' (Македонска трибина) newspaper initially attracted certain misguided Macedonian economic emigrants who provided financial support for the pro-Mihailov I.M.R.O.

Mihailov's emissaries toured Europe also and he himself visited several European states in 1927. The aim of these visits was to secure the support of European political and other public figures for the "liberation" of Macedonia. The 'La Macedonie' newspaper was started in Geneva as a means to promote I.M.R.O. propaganda abroad.

Mihailov made very great efforts to gain control of all the various strands of the I.M.R.O. and to become its sole organiser. As he was opposed in this by Aleksandar Protogerov, Mihailov gave orders for Protogerov's murder, which took place on 7th July 1928. This resulted in the grouping of Protogerov's supporters around Petar Shandanov and their secession from the pro-Mihailov I.M.R.O. This split swiftly developed into a conflict between the two factions.

After Protogerov's death the Mihailovists increased their control of Macedonian emigrant organisations in Bulgaria, such as the Macedonian National Committee, the Ilinden Organisation, the Macedonian Youth League, the Macedonian Scientific Institute and the Vardar Students' Organisation. Aware that they were losing their positions in these organisations the Protogerovists began

to make approaches to the I.M.R.O. (United) and to find certain points of contact. This drift was reflected in their newspapers 'Revolutionary Newspaper' (Революционен лист) and 'Macedonian Justice' (Македонска правда). However, the Protogerovists took no decisive step and did not join the camp of the left. Killings and assassinations carried out by the two factions continued, not only in Pirin Macedonia but also in all the larger towns of Bulgaria.

#### NATIONAL POLITICAL EVENTS AND ACTION TAKEN BY MACEDONIANS IN PIRIN MACEDONIA UP TO THE APRIL WAR OF 1941

##### *Directions and Successes of the I.M.R.O. (United)*

The terrifying extent of the political terrorism which was causing the rapid deterioration of the internal situation in Bulgaria was one of the causes of the replacement of the Popular Bloc government in a coup engineered by officers belonging to the Zveno Group and led by General Damyan Velchev. A new government headed by Premier Kimon Georgiev was formed in the courses of the coup of 19th May 1934. One of the first measures it undertook was to disband the Mihailovist I.M.R.O. Its leaders were arrested and its publishing activity banned. At the same time, in order to eliminate totally that "state within a state", the government reformed the Petrich District and incorporated it into the Plovdiv Region. This effectively destroyed the administrative individuality of that part of Pirin Macedonia.

The swift disbanding of the Mihailovist I.M.R.O., which took place virtually overnight, indicated that it had been able to exist only as long as it had the support of the Bulgarian rulers whom it had served. The decline and disappearance of the I.M.R.O. lightened the burden of the population of Pirin Macedonia and of all progressive and patriotic Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria.

The Zveno Government adopted a course of amity towards Yugoslavia, established diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. on 23rd June 1943, and announced certain changes in domestic policy. This was initially understood to indicate the creation of a situation more favourable to the growth of socio-political activity. However the standpoint of the government led by K. Georgiev in respect of the Macedonians and the recognition, or rather lack of re-

cognition of their national characteristics and rights was no different from that of previous Bulgarian governments. The process of the national differentiation and affirmation of the Macedonian people did, however, receive an extremely authoritative acknowledgment in the shape of the stance taken by the Comintern in April 1934 on the treatment of the Macedonians as members of a separate South Slav nation.

This was an indubitable sign of the recognition of the physiognomy of the Macedonians as a concrete reality which it was no longer possible to overlook and had large-scale repercussions in the form of the adoption by other progressive and revolutionary movements of more prudent attitudes towards the Macedonian national question. The espousal of such an attitude by the leaderships of the Balkan Communist Parties, although not immediate or unanimous, was reflected positively in the linking of the Macedonian national liberation struggle with the proletarian class movement, seen most clearly in the I.M.R.O. (United)'s accurate assessment of the national character of the Macedonian question. The Central Committee of the I.M.R.O. (United) at once passed a special resolution setting forth its view that the Macedonians constituted a separate nation.

This standpoint also underlay the Pirin Macedonian I.M.R.O. (United) District Committee's resolution in connection with the conditions then prevalent in Macedonia. This resolution emphasized that the Balkan bourgeoisies, in order to justify the national subjugation of a fettered and split Macedonia, were denying the principal national characteristics of the Macedonian people and also the process of the creation of the Macedonian nation.

A publication issued by the American Macedonian People's League, whose leaders were members of the I.M.R.O. (United), dates from the same period, 1934. It attempts a theoretical argument providing a Marxist basis for the thesis of the existence of a separate Macedonian nation. The article entitled "Why Are We Macedonians a Separate Nation?", contained in the above-mentioned publication, directly answers the question posed, categorically affirming that we Macedonians "are neither Serbs, Greeks nor Bulgarians but *a separate Macedonian nation* which is fighting for its national liberation and separation in to *its own Macedonian state*."

Several important publications and public statements were also issued by the District Committee of the I.M.R.O. (United) for Pirin Macedonia embodying similar attitudes and feelings on the national, cultural and political integrity of Macedonia. On the occasion of the request made by Macedonians in Greece for free use of their own mother tongue in schools and public affairs, put forward in "Rizospastis", the organ of the Greek Communist Party,

the District Committee of the I.M.R.O. (United) for Pirin Macedonia issued a highly significant declaration in early 1935. "Just as the Macedonians under Greek rule are neither 'Slavophones' nor 'pure Greeks'", it stated, "and the Macedonians under Serbian rule are not 'true Serbs', so the Macedonians under Bulgarian rule are not Bulgarians, nor do they wish to become such. The Macedonian people have a past, present and future of their own, not as a patchwork of the imperialist states of Bulgaria, Greece and Serbia but as an independent Slavonic element with all the marks of a separate nation which has been fighting for decades to gain its own right of self-determination, even to the point of secession, in a separate political and constitutional unit and outwith the subjugation of the imperialist states."

Basing its arguments upon such standpoints, the leadership of the I.M.R.O. (United) in Bulgaria attacked the dissolution of the Petrich administrative region and the mechanical annexing of its territory to the Sofia and Plovdiv districts as it saw this as an intentional destruction of the compactness of Pirin Macedonia. It also issued urgent requests for a significant improvement in the socio-economic situation of Pirin Macedonia, for its industrial development and for an increase in production and income for its inhabitants.

The positive evolution of the I.M.R.O. (United) from 1934 onwards and its adoption of a just position on the Macedonian national question influenced the rapid broadening of the ranks of its organised members and sympathisers. Its political ideology and national platform were influences which helped to attract a large circle of young people into its ranks. The intellectual youth of Pirin Macedonia and among Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria were attracted by the watchwords and the methods of the I.M.R.O. (United) and actively joined the Macedonian People's Student League. This latter organisation, under the definite influence of the I.M.R.O. (United) engaged in action supporting the struggle against fascism and for national rights, democracy and progress.

The Bulgarian rulers, however, saw in the overall orientation and activity of the I.M.R.O. (United) an obstacle to the implementation of their de-nationalisation policy and plans for conquest. Therefore, as early as 1934, they had begun on a course of arrests and trials of I.M.R.O. (United) functionaries and activists in Pirin Macedonia and in several Bulgarian towns. The heaviest blow to the I.M.R.O. (United) was the attack of 1936 when about sixty distinguished leaders and activists of the Organisation were discovered and taken to court.

At the trial of this group, as at other earlier trials, the accused openly stated that they were of Macedonian nationality and were fighting for the achievement of sovereignty and for the constitution-

nal establishment of the Macedonian nation. Their courageous statements found wide echoes among the Macedonian masses in Bulgaria and helped both to confirm and to raise their national awareness. The great trial of 1936 ended with the pronouncement of numerous heavy sentences upon the accused. The principal leaders of the I.M.R.O. (United), Dimitar Vlahov, Vladimir Poptomov and Metodi Shatorov, members of the Central Committee abroad, were also sentenced in their absence.

Shortly afterwards organised illegal I.M.R.O. (United) activity came to a halt in Pirin Macedonia and Bulgaria as it did in the parts of Macedonia under Greek and Yugoslav rule. This was a result of the altered tactics of the most progressive forces in the period of the growth of the struggle against fascist aggression and the imperialist kindling of the World War. The traces left by the I.M.R.O. (United) among the most progressive and patriotic Macedonians in Bulgaria continued to exist and were deepened by fresh events and actions on the part of the Macedonians in their struggle for national political emancipation and affirmation.

#### *Intensified Macedonian Cultural and National Activity before Fascist Aggression in the Balkans*

The demise of the organised life of the I.M.R.O. (United) in Bulgaria resulted in a decisive orientation of those of its current activists and supporters not affected by the attacks and trials towards a more extensive use of legal channels and opportunities to foster better conceived Macedonian cultural and national activities.

The progressive daily and periodical press proved an extremely effective means to this end and young Macedonian intellectuals were the chief aim and object of the above-mentioned activity.

In this respect "Macedonian News" (Македонски вести) newspaper, published and edited in Sofia from 1935 by the Macedonian publicist Angel Dinev, played an important rôle. The paper featured articles and other contributions on significant periods and personalities in the Macedonian people's struggle for liberation and constitutionalisation. It also served to disclose intentional distortions of Macedonian history by representatives of the ruling circles in the Balkans. In 1936 "Macedonian News" became a weekly and a more successful dissemination of a new, Marxist understanding of the essence of the national question and of the nationality of the Macedonians was made possible. The paper became increasingly a tribune for those young Macedonian intellectuals

who had been weaned on progressive ideas and healthy patriotism. The Bulgarian authorities, however, could not tolerate the Macedonian national orientation and the progressiveness of the "Macedonian News" and therefore banned any further publication of the paper. The "Macedonian Land" (Македонска земја) newspaper, edited by Mitko Zafirovski during the few months of its existence, experienced a similar fate and ceased publication by order of the censorship.

Many Macedonians expressed their views either in Bulgarian newspapers and periodicals or through publications of their own. An example of the latter was Angel Dinev's book "The Macedonian Slavs" (Македонските Славјани) which sought the Macedonian nation's roots in historical development. This was a book especially sought after by the younger generations of Macedonians in both Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

The book entitled "The Rebirth of Macedonia and the Ilinden Uprising" (Преродбата на Македонија и Илинденското востание) satisfactorily cast a theoretical Marxist light on the process of forming the Macedonian nation. Its author was Kosta Veselinov, a publicist and former functionary of the I.M.R.O. (United) in Pirin Macedonia and Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad). The fact that the circle of its readers widened rapidly in Pirin Macedonia and among Macedonian emigrants in Bulgaria emphasizes both the book's positive aspects and the developing awareness and interest in their own history of the Macedonians there.

Anniversaries of important historic events were used not only to confirm their correct place and significance but also to draw appropriate moral lessons and to determine the direction of further cultural and political activity. In this respect the thirty-fifth anniversary of the Ilinden Uprising was successfully marked by the publication of the anthology "Ilinden 1903", containing memoirs, articles and other contributions by well-known Macedonian journalists, writers and other activists.

Similar periodical publications were issued by various of the Macedonian brotherhoods in Bulgaria, most notably by the Kukush (Kilkis) Brotherhood in Sofia. For several years it marked the anniversary of Gotsé Delchev's death with the publication of a special newspaper entitled "Gotse's Paper" (Гоцев Лист).

Also of importance in those years was the cultural and artistic activity of the Macedonian brotherhoods, like the Kukush (Kilkis) Brotherhood, which came under the influence of progressive and patriotic Macedonians. The participation of Atanas Romanov, a former member of the I.M.R.O. (United), and, at certain periods, Nikola Vaptsarov in this brotherhood's work made a large contribution to its successful cultural and artistic activity.



Patriotic Macedonians of an anti-fascist disposition were involved in the efforts to create in Bulgaria an extensive democratic and anti-fascist movement for the fight against the forces of reaction and fascism both within the country and on the international front. They saw in this movement a support and ally in their struggle for national rights and the unhindered development of the Macedonian people's national culture. From 1936 onwards the engagement of the younger generations of Macedonians and in especial of members of the Macedonian People's Student League was particularly evident. The Macedonian students' organisation was closely linked to and actively collaborated with the Bulgarian All-People's Student League (BOHCC), whose membership included communists and other anti-regime and left-orientated students.

Macedonian students' circles, which considered important questions related to the Macedonian struggle for national liberation and affirmation, were established in Pirin Macedonia and in other places in Bulgaria. Community of aims brought together progressive Macedonian students from all three parts of Macedonia in collaboration and an exchange of experience. From this point of view particular benefit was reaped from the visit of a delegation of students from Belgrade to Sofia in 1938 for the jubilee celebrations at Sofia University. The visit to Sofia of students from Vardar Macedonia, led by the student partisan Kuzman Yosifovski, provided an opportunity for direct contact between Macedonian student leaders in Yugoslavia and those in Bulgaria. It also enabled them to reach agreement in connection with the future united struggle of progressive Macedonian students against fascism and for the preservation of peace. This fraternal concord and national unity of spirit found public expression in the joint literary evening held in the Krushevo Brotherhood Centre. The Macedonian students brought back with them on their return to Vardar Macedonia a large number of books, pamphlets and other publications, thus helping at least in part to fill a void in Macedonia where there was a great lack of Macedonian historical, popular scientific and artistic literature.

During those years poetry in the Macedonian language occupied a particularly important place among the various genres. Collections of the verse of Venko Markovski and Kole Nedelkovski demonstrated the particular characteristics and richness of expression of the language and illustrated the possibility of creating literary works in it. The appearance of literary Macedonian poetry played an important rôle in spreading Macedonian national awareness and culture. For this very reason it was met with open hostility by reactionary official critics, of the type of Yordan Badev, in Bulgaria. In contrast, however, progressive publicists and writers, such as Todor Pavlov and Georgi Bakalov, rated contemporary li-

terary poetry in the Macedonian language highly, stating that it was not written in a Bulgarian dialect but rather represented the most convincing proof of attempts to form and organise the language of a small people within the family of literary languages.

At this time the Bulgarian Communist Party supported activities that contributed to the strengthening of Macedonian national individuality and its members became protagonists of such activities. The members of the Macedonian Literary Circle, which was set up and began to function illegally in 1938, were outstanding in this respect. The nucleus of the group consisted of Nikola Vaptsarov, Anton Popov, Mihail Smatrakaliev, Kiril Nikolov, Gyorgyi Abadzhiev, Asen Shurlov and Dimitar Mitrev. Later the Circle included also the Macedonian poets Venko Markovski and Kole Nedelkovski and, for a certain period, the journalist Mitko Zafirovski.

The Circle examined works by its members and also papers on current problems of Macedonian national development and culture. Particularly important were papers submitted by Nikola Vaptsarov and Anton Popov and a fundamental study of Krsté Misirkov's book "On Macedonian Matters" (За македонските работи).

After Nazi Germany's attack on the U.S.S.R. in 1941 and the intensified persecution of democratic and anti-fascist elements in Bulgaria the fruitful activity of the Macedonian Literary Circle in Sofia came to a halt. The police interned several of its members but those who remained at liberty continued to work and to struggle within the framework of the Bulgarian anti-fascist movement.

#### ETHNIC CHANGES IN AEGEAN MACEDONIA AFTER THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES

##### *New Situation of Macedonians under Greek Rule*

The sanctioning at Versailles of the partition of Macedonia which had been carried out in accordance with the 1913 Treaty of Bucharest meant that the southern coastal regions of Macedonia were incorporated into Greece. The geographical area in question covers some 34,356 sq. kms. and its population in 1920 was 1,090,432.

Within the administrative structure of Greece Aegean Macedonia became a Province with a Governor, who was the Minister

for Northern Greece, at its head. The Province was divided into three administrative districts with their seats in Thessaloniki, Kavalla and Kozhani (Kozani). The national composition of Aegean Macedonia changed considerably in the period immediately following the wars. A course of subjugation and persecution of the Macedonians was immediately adopted by the rulers in Athens and this resulted in the emigration of Macedonians from Greece. After the signing of the Convention of 27th November 1919 between Greece and Bulgaria on the "voluntary" exchange of population this emigration assumed very large proportions. On the pretext of implementing the Convention several tens of thousands of Macedonians were forced to leave Greece and resettle in Bulgaria. In the eastern parts of Aegean Macedonia and in the Kukush (Kilkis) district, which had suffered heavily during the wars, the clearance of the Macedonian population was especially noticeable. This was also true, however, in other areas such as Enidzhé Vardar, Gümendzhé and Thessaloniki, which had not experienced any great changes or population shifts during the course of the wars.

With the 1923 Lausanne Agreement between Greece and Turkey on the exchange of Moslem and Christian populations in the two countries a fresh wave of emigration took place. In the course of 1924 almost the entire Moslem population of Aegean Macedonia, which included some forty thousand Moslems of Macedonian origin, emigrated to Turkey. At the same time numerous groups of Greeks from Asia Minor and the Caucasus were settled in Aegean Macedonia. As a result of these migrations the ethnic composition of northern Greece was significantly altered, to the disadvantage of the Macedonians and to the advantage of the Greeks. In 1920 the population of Aegean Macedonia had numbered 1,090,432, the majority of whom were either Macedonians or Moslems; in 1928, as a consequence of the immigration of several hundreds of thousands of Greeks, the population was 1,418,477. However, despite systematic colonisation and other measures adopted by the Greek rulers to alter the ethnic structure and physiognomy of Aegean Macedonia, the Macedonian population remained predominant in the districts of Kostur (Kastoria), Voden (Edessa) and Lerin (Florina).

As alien populations had remained within the framework of the Greek state, in Sèvres on 10th August 1920 the Entente powers reached an "Agreement on the Protection of the Non-Greek Nationalities in Greece". According to the terms of this agreement Greece was bound to respect "the interests of the inhabitants who differ from the majority of the population in nationality, language or faith" (Art. 46). This agreement was made by the tailors of the map of Europe with a view to stifling the bitterness felt by the masses of those nationalities who had been left outside the boundaries

of their motherlands and who were downgraded into being minorities without rights.

According to the clauses of the Treaty of Sèvres Greece was duty bound to secure for the non-Greek nationalities equal civil and political rights and freedoms and the opportunity to use their mother tongues in the press, in the courts of law, in religious worship and in primary school teaching. The ruling circles in Bulgaria made use of the Treaty of Sèvres to have the Macedonians in Greece treated as Bulgarians, that is to say as a Bulgarian national minority. They succeeded in achieving this with the signing by the Foreign Ministers Kalfov and Politis of a protocol in Geneva on 29th September 1924. In accordance with this protocol the Greek government officially recognised the presence in Greece of a Bulgarian national minority and undertook to secure for it appropriate national-political rights and freedoms. In order to implement the agreement which had been reached the League of Nations appointed its own two representatives, Colonel A. Krof and Major Marde de Rover, to the Joint Greek and Bulgarian Commission.

The Kalfov-Politis protocol was never realised, a fact to which the energetic opposition of the then rulers of the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes partly contributed. The Yugoslav government explained its position by declaring that a recognition of the Macedonians in Greece as a Bulgarians minority would inevitably lead to a similar request from Sofia for the recognition of the Macedonian population in Yugoslavia as a Bulgarian national minority. In order to put pressure on Greece to abandon such a policy, the Yugoslav government unilaterally withdrew from the 1913 Treaty of Friendship with Greece.

The Greek ruling class was neither convinced about nor had any interest in putting into action the Kalfov-Politis agreement since official recognition of the existence of a Bulgarian national minority contained within it the seeds of a recognition of Bulgarian pretensions towards the Greek part of Macedonia. At the beginning of 1925, therefore, the Greek Parliament rejected a proposal for the ratification of the Kalfov-Politis protocol.

In reply to frequent criticisms at the League of Nations that Greece was not respecting the Sèvres Agreement on the rights of minorities, the Greek government promised that in the same year it would facilitate the introduction of the use of the mother tongue of the local population into primary schools in Macedonia. To reaffirm this intention the government established a special three-member commission, consisting of Papazahariou, Sajakchis and Lazarou, in the Ministry of Education. This commission was to compile a primer which would be ready for the start of the 1925 school year. The primer, which was called an ABC (Абѣцѣдар) was

in the Lerin (Florina) and Bitola dialect of the Macedonian language and was printed in the Latin alphabet.

At the same time the Greek government was preparing a legal order for the establishment of minority schools which would make possible teaching in the mother tongue, dependent upon the wishes of parents and their statements that a language other than Greek was spoken in their area. The primer, however, was immediately confiscated and the measures for the opening of minority schools for Macedonian children in Aegean Macedonia stopped. Taking as their justification the contradictions and war of rivalry over Macedonia among the Balkan states, the rulers in Athens continued their policy of de-nationalisation and assimilation in respect of the Macedonians in Greece, using various forms of political and economic pressure and terrorisation.

#### *Aegean Macedonia until the World Economic Crisis of 1929-32*

The deterioration in Greece's economic and political situation following her defeat in the Graeco-Turkish War was reflected in acute national-political and economic contradictions and conflicts. Greece's military defeat and the ensuing mass unrest led to the Liberal Party's victory in the parliamentary elections of 16th December 1923. This and the plebiscite of 13th April 1924 made the declaration of a republic in Greece possible. The replacement of the monarchy by a republic did not, however, signify any real change or improvement in the system of bourgeois class rule as was soon to be demonstrated when, on 1st May 1924, the republican government brought out the army in a large number of towns to deal with the workers and Communists. Conflicts between the soldiery and the labouring masses were particularly bloody in Athens, but similar clashes also took place in virtually all the towns of Aegean Macedonia. These led to the forceful stifling of the workers' movement by both army and police. Thus, with the help of the army, the workers' strikes in Voden (Edessa), organised and led by the distinguished Communist and Trades Union leader Trifun Hadzhiyanev, was foreshortened.

The struggle of the workers in Aegean Macedonia for their economic, social, political and national rights came increasingly under Communist influence. Branches of the Communist Party were founded and functioned successfully in the larger towns of Aegean Macedonia and of Thrace – Thessaloniki, Kavalla, Serres, Voden (Edessa), Negush (Naousa) and Ber (Veria). Under Communist leadership the workers engaged in strike and tariff actions in their struggle against soulless exploitation and subjugation.

In addition to other general class and ideological reasons the highly acceptable standpoint of the Greek Communist Party for the solution of the Macedonian Question by the formation of an autonomous Macedonia within the framework of a Balkan Federation served to attract the mass of the working people of Aegean Macedonia into the Party's ranks. At its Third Extraordinary Congress, held in Athens from 16th November to 3rd December 1924 in accord with the position and recommendations of both the Balkan Communist Federation and the Comintern, the Party adopted the view of the need to unite the Macedonians into an independent state unit which would be an equal member of a broader Balkan federative community safeguarding the national and democratic rights of the masses.

Increasingly acute socio-political contradictions resulted in a deterioration in the situation throughout the country. Reactionary bourgeois circles thought, therefore, to deliver a temporary blow to the people by introducing a dictatorship in order to frighten them. On 25th June 1925 General Pangalos dissolved the parliament, imprisoning a large number of political figures and ordering that the Communists be brought to trial. In June and August of the same year groups of Communist functionaries were arrested on the charge of engaging in propaganda aimed at the secession of Aegean Macedonia from the Greek state and the creation of a united, autonomous Macedonia. Such persecution notwithstanding, the Communists continued to be active, especially at the time of district elections when, for example, it was with their help that the bourgeois politician Patrikios was elected Mayor of Thessaloniki.

The policy of General Pangalos' fourteen months' dictatorship towards the neighbouring Balkan states was characterised on the one hand by the adventurism of the militaristic demonstration in Petrich, Bulgaria, and on the other by manoeuvres to neutralise and then to win over Yugoslavia. Taking a border incident as his pretext, Pangalos ordered the Greek army to enter Bulgarian territory. The League of Nations at once intervened, however, compelling the Greek government to withdraw its army and to pay compensation to Bulgaria.

During the period of Pangalos' government relations between Greece and Yugoslavia underwent a rapid change from extreme tension to the conclusion of inter-state agreements. At first meetings were held in both countries the purpose of which was to enflame public opinion and also to "prove" to the world the justness of their own pretensions. In reply to the Yugoslav government's campaign for the recognition of the Macedonians in Greece as Serbs, i.e. a Serbian national minority, the Greek rulers increased their terrorisation of the Macedonians. Macedonians were forced, by means of open attacks, harassments and interrogations,

to flee from Greece. After the chauvinistic pogrom of 1st February 1926 in Sorovich and similar attacks in other towns and villages whole families emigrated from Aegean Macedonia, principally to the nearby border regions of Yugoslavia, namely to the districts of Bitola and Gevgeliya.

Because of its domestic and foreign problems General Pangalos' government finally concluded several agreements with the Yugoslav government on 17th August 1926. These in part regulated the thorny questions of the Free Zone in Thessaloniki and the railway line from Thessaloniki to Gevgeliya. The Greek government's agreement to recognise the Macedonians in Greece as Serbs and to accord them the status of a national minority was a great success for the Yugoslav government. The majority of the Greek bourgeoisie and bourgeois parties were not, however, prepared to accept these agreements with Yugoslavia reached by the Pangalos government. The Greek parliament refused to ratify the agreements and in the same month the Pangalos government was toppled.

The overthrow of the dictatorial regime stimulated the recrudescence of the workers' movement and the spread of Communist influence in Greece. This was shown as early as the parliamentary elections of November 1926 when the Communists gained ten of the total of sixteen representative's mandates won by the parties of the left. The Communists owed this success to their persistent fight to safeguard the socio-economic, political and national interests and demands of the workers.

The broad masses of the working population bore unemployment, high costs and the fall in the drachma only with the utmost difficulty. Workers' strikes came to be everyday occurrences and frequently culminated in bloodshed. Strikes by tobacco workers in the larger towns of Aegean Macedonia were particularly numerous and well organised. Some of these strikes involved whole regions as was the case with the tobacco workers' strike of June 1928 in the eastern part of Aegean Macedonia. This strike was bloodily put down by the army and the gendarmerie who killed six workers and wounded twenty in Kavalla alone.

Between 1927 and 1929 there was a notable relaxation of tension between Greece and Yugoslavia and between Greece and Bulgaria. On 27th November 1927 a commercial treaty between Greece and Yugoslavia was signed and in March 1929 a new agreement on the regulation of a number of subsidiary questions. The parties to these agreements completely ignored the question of the Macedonian national minority in Greece.

Discussions were also held and some agreement reached between Greece and Bulgaria during this period. In December 1927 the two states signed a treaty, which was ratified in 1928, on the

regulation of the question of property rights that had arisen as a result of the mutual resettlement of population. The fact that in 1928 over thirty-two thousand Macedonians emigrated from Greece to Bulgaria speaks sufficiently convincingly of the extent of this resettlement. Two years later this treaty was superseded by the Mollov-Kafandaris Treaty, which extended the former. The latter treaty was called after the ministers who were signatories on behalf of the two governments.

### *Form Taken by the World Economic Crisis in Aegean Macedonia*

The exchange and resettlement of population, which assumed a particularly massive character in the period from 1918 to 1928, contributed to a weakening of the economy in the part of Macedonia under Greek rule. Up to 1928, in place of those Turks and Macedonians who had emigrated, there arrived in Aegean Macedonia about six hundred and fifty thousand Greek immigrants from Asia Minor, Pontus, the Caucasus, Thrace, the other Balkan states and the U.S.S.R. The majority of them, some 427,297, were settled in the villages of Aegean Macedonia where they contributed to the creation of a surplus in the agricultural labour force. In order to reduce the shortage of workable land large-scale ameliorative measures were undertaken. Five swamps and lakes in the districts of Ardzhana, Amatovo, Enidzhé Vardar, Tehin and Bereketlik in Aegean Macedonia were drained and four hundred and sixty-two thousand decares of land reclaimed. The enormous government expense involved in these works and in solving the problem of the refugees inevitably led to the contracting of loans both in the country and abroad and to the financial overburdening and exhaustion of Greece.

Natural growth and the added influx of immigrants to the towns led to a high rate of unemployment. This was in some measure offset by a certain revival and expansion in craftsmanship, industry, commerce, fisheries and mining. A relatively large advance was noticeable in the tobacco industry in Thessaloniki, Kavalla and Drama as well as in the textile industry in Thessaloniki, Voden (Edessa), Negush (Naousa) and Ber (Veria).

The broad masses of the working people in Aegean Macedonia, as in the whole of Greece, felt the blow of the great world crisis which broke out in 1929. The dissatisfaction of masses grew with the increase in the pressure exerted by the regime. In Aegean Macedonia this pressure was justified on the pretext of a pursuit of the outcast bands and terrorists belonging to Vancho Mihailov. The deterioration in the economic and political situation led to an

expansion of the influence of the Greek Communist Party and other progressive social forces among the population of Aegean Macedonia. At the parliamentary elections of September 1932 the Greek Communist Party gained four times more votes than it had in 1928 and secured ten representative's mandates. The majority of votes cast for the Communist Party were registered in Aegean Macedonia. The same was the case with the left-orientated Agrarian Party which, at the 1932 elections, thanks to votes from Aegean Macedonia, secured eleven places in the Greek Parliament. During and immediately after the crisis, under the influence of progressive ideas and the workers' movement, the people's struggle for an improvement in their socio-political position and for the democratization of the country was strengthened.

#### *I.M.R.O. (United) Activity in Aegean Macedonia*

The Greek Communist Party gained the confidence of the working masses because, in contrast to the bourgeois parties, it had a revolutionary platform and stood for the people's fundamental rights and interests and the unification of the whole of Macedonia and its inclusion within an equal federation of the Balkan Peoples. This was of enormous significance in attracting the Macedonians in Greece and in their subsequent organisation in line with the aims of the Communist Party of Greece's struggle for a radical social reformation and for the national emancipation and equality of the peoples.

The Greek Communist Party lent its support to the formation and spreading of the I.M.R.O. (United) as an illegal national revolutionary organisation fighting for the national and political liberation and the unification of the Macedonian people and for their equal status within a federation with the other Balkan peoples. The linking of the Central Committee of the I.M.R.O. (United) in Vienna with its supporters in Aegean Macedonia was effected through the active participation of Dimitar Vlahov, the leading personality in the I.M.R.O. (United), and of Nedelko Pop Nedelkov, a famous Macedonian revolutionary. The latter established channels in Thessaloniki for receiving and distributing throughout Aegean Macedonia the newspapers "Balkan Federation" (Балканска федерација) and "Macedonian work" (Македонско дело) and also a variety of propaganda material sent out by the central organisation. Hristo Tsvetkov, the Federalist, established links with I.M.R.O. (United) activists in the Greek part of Macedonia via Albania. The clandestine transportation of materials involved both considerable difficulty and danger and, in 1934, led to the death of

Gyorgyi Krontselchev in Thessaloniki at the hands of the Greek police.

The formation of the I.M.R.O. (United) in Aegean Macedonia took place later than in the other parts of Macedonia. The Greek Communist Party played an active rôle in the preparatory work connected with the organisation of the I.M.R.O. (United). In accordance with a directive from the Central Committee of the Greek Communist Party a Conference of the Minorities was arranged in Thessaloniki in June 1933. The conference was held under the leadership of the Secretary of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Greece and the Instructor from the Party's Central Committee Stelios Sklavenas who was well acquainted with Balkan national problems. Macedonian delegates from Thessaloniki, Lagadina, Negush (Naousa) and the districts of Lerin (Florina), Kostur (Castoria), Voden (Edessa) and Drama, Jewish representatives from Thessaloniki, a Vlach from Ber (Veria) and Moslem from Thrace attended the conference.

The conference decided that minority cells should be formed in conjunction with the local committees of the Greek Communist Party and that these should develop into special minorities' branches. In September of that year a second conference was held in Ber (Veria) to examine the execution of the tasks that had been set. Three months later a third conference was held in Thessaloniki and was attended by delegates from all the districts of Aegean Macedonia.

Immediately after the Fifth Congress of the Greek Communist Party a conference was summoned in Voden (Edessa) in March 1934 in connection with the setting up of the I.M.R.O. (United). This conference, which was attended by delegates from Voden (Edessa) and the districts of Kostur (Castoria) and Enidzhë Vardar, elected the leaders of the I.M.R.O. (United) for Aegean Macedonia. These were headed by Andrea Chipov, a well-known Macedonian revolutionary, Communist functionary and candidate-member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Greece. Hristo Galabov, Mihail Klyonev and Aleko Tenekedzhiev were also elected to the leadership.

The seat of the organisation was in Thessaloniki and a small illegal printing press was set up there. This press published leaflets and other propaganda material in Macedonian. Certain local I.M.R.O. (United) branches also printed material using decidedly primitive techniques. Thus the Lerin (Florina) branch sponsored and published the illegal paper "Agrarian Banner" (Земјоделско знаме). Use was also made of certain other local newspapers, such as the "Nestorion", published for emigrants in the U.S.A., Canada and Australia, to print Macedonian folk songs and literature.

The Comintern's recognition of the Macedonians as members of a distinct Macedonian nation made a considerable contribution to the success of the I.M.R.O. (United)'s activity and its support from the Communist Party of Greece. This prompted the United I.M.R.O. to put forward demands for the opening of Macedonian schools, for the use of the mother tongue in public life and for other national and cultural rights. That these demands were at this time supported by the leaders of the Greek Communist Party is illustrated by the following statement made by Sklavenas, the leader of the Parliamentary Communist Group, in the Greek Parliament on 25th April 1936: "A further question which the government is ignoring in its declarations is that of granting complete equality of rights to both the local population and to the national minorities living in Greece. This in the main concerns the Macedonian nation. Anyone who has travelled through Macedonia, especially in those districts which are inhabited by compact masses of Macedonians, has surely felt the particular pressure which is being exerted upon them. The right to have their own schools, to use the Macedonian language and practise their own customs is strictly forbidden them. Such a situation has compelled the Macedonian population to organise itself and to wage a struggle to achieve these rights, a struggle in which we cannot but support them."

A statement of this sort went beyond certain attitudes held at this time by the leadership of the Greek Communist Party in connection with the Macedonian national question. The Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Greece, held in December 1935, had stressed the need to replace the slogan of a united and independent Macedonia by that of "full equality for the minorities". This alteration was justified in terms of the change which had taken place in the national composition of the population of Greek Macedonia and by the new overall circumstances, Balkan and international, the basic aim being now to strengthen the anti-fascist and anti-war struggle which demanded a unity of all the progressive forces.

Circumstances which had been favourable to the growth and activity of the I.M.R.O. (United) changed with the establishment of the Metaxas dictatorship in August 1936. The new regime declared the Communist Party of Greece illegal and set in motion large-scale arrests, prosecutions and internments of activists and functionaries of both the Communist Party and the I.M.R.O. (United). Among those affected by this policy were Andrea Chipov, Lazo Trpovski, Hristo Galabov, Trifun Hadzhiyanev, Aleko Tenekezhiev, Foti Urumov and Kosta Dumov. Thus the I.M.R.O. (United) in Aegean Macedonia, which, during its brief existence,

had contributed to the co-ordination and activation of the Macedonians in their struggle for social and national rights, came to be dispersed.

### *Macedonians under the Metaxas Dictatorship and in the Graeco-Italian War*

The Greek bourgeoisie was frightened by the progressive stirring of the masses and sought a way out of the situation by introducing a dictatorship. The restoration of the monarchy strengthened the royalist and right-wing elements and led to an increase in the pressure exerted upon the working people. The spring of 1936 was full of strikes and demonstrations against exploitation and subjugation. The authorities used harsh measures to put down these strikes and demonstrations. In the course of disrupting the strike of Thessaloniki tobacco workers and the all-peoples' demonstration of 8th and 9th May 1936 the gendarmerie killed twelve and wounded several dozen people. The funeral of the demonstrators who had been killed, involving some fifteen thousand participants, assumed itself the character of a very persuasive demonstration against the violence of the rulers.

The Athens government reached the conclusion that harsh measures and reprisals were not enough to "regulate" the situation, and at the beginning of August 1936 General Metaxas dissolved parliament, suspended the constitution, proclaimed martial law and introduced a dictatorship. Immediately there were large-scale arrests of Communist and democratically oriented politicians. Employing extreme brutality and methods reminiscent of the Inquisition the dictatorial regime persecuted the Macedonians, interning them on uninhabited islands and inflicting heavy and humiliating sentences upon them. Under the Metaxas dictatorship the Macedonians were the object of discrimination in every respect and were treated as second-class citizens. Some tens of thousands of them were tortured in prisons and police stations. Macedonians rarely received good, fertile land in the reclaimed zones as this was primarily allocated to deserving and trusted supporters of the Greater Greek regime. Macedonians were not permitted to work on the construction of the Metaxas line of defence and young Macedonians could only obtain employment if they joined the right-wing National Youth Organisation, the E.O.N.

In addition to the state apparatus, existing and also newly founded nationalist organisations such as the Greek National Union, the E.E.E., were mobilised in the forceful assimilation and ter-



rorisation of the Macedonians. In 1938 a special law forbade any use whatsoever of the Macedonian language. Evening classes were set up in the villages to teach Greek to the adult population.

Prior to and at the outset of the Graeco-Italian War, which broke out on 29th October 1940, thousands of Macedonians from the border regions were deported to the Aegean Islands, where many of them died of hunger, tuberculosis or torture. The regime interned as "suspects" many peasants from the districts of Lerin (Florina), Serres and Drama although the sons of the very same people had been mobilised in the Graeco-Italian War and were dying in the defence of Greece against fascist aggression. In addition to some four thousand five hundred Macedonians already interned, chiefly on the grounds of speaking their own mother tongue, on the outbreak of the war a further one thousand two hundred civilians and three hundred and eighty soldiers were despatched as "suspects" to the islands of Thasos and Cephalonia.

Although extremely dissatisfied with the Metaxas dictatorship and with the entire system of economic exploitation and national oppression the Macedonians were aware that the invasion of Greece by the Italian fascist forces would mean even darker bondage and so they responded to the mobilisation and fought self-sacrificingly against the fascist invaders. In the front lines at Morava, Podgradets, Mt. Ivan and Klisura there were some eighty thousand soldiers from Aegean Macedonia. Almost two-thirds of those killed in the Graeco-Italian War were mobilised peasants from Aegean Macedonia and western Thrace. The contribution of the Macedonian and Greek populations of the border districts of Castoria and Prespa was of equal significance in the matter of the construction of bunkers, trenches and other forms of defence on the front facing the Italian army.

Despite the Italian fascist army's technical superiority it was pushed out of Greek territory thanks to the decisive and self-sacrificing struggle of the Greek and Macedonian peoples. Mussolini's plans for rapid and easy conquest were destroyed above all by the stubborn resistance of the anti-fascist democratic forces of the Greek and Macedonian peoples.

The Greek Army's successful defensive struggle of six months ended when Greece was attacked and overcome by the war machine of Hitler's Germany. The lightning attack of 6th April 1941 on Yugoslavia and Greece had the aim of subduing those two countries and thus giving Germany control of the Balkans, a necessary pre-condition for the commencement of the war against the Soviet Union. The German offensive against Yugoslavia and

Greece also aimed to prevent any lasting front or war of positions in the Balkans, thus coming to the aid of Germany's ally, fascist Italy, which was deeply embroiled in the war with Greece. Under the heavy pressure from the German armies which had entered by way of Bulgaria and Yugoslavia, the Greek Army was compelled to retreat and finally to capitulate on 20th April 1941. The capitulation and the fascist occupation of Greece meant a change for the worse as far as the Macedonians in Aegean Macedonia were concerned.

## WAR OF NATIONAL LIBERATION AND REVOLUTION IN MACEDONIA

### OCCUPATION OF MACEDONIA

#### *Partition of Macedonia*

After the occupation of France and the air Battle of Britain the Third Reich, in its attempt to achieve world domination, was preparing in 1941 to settle its accounts with the Soviet Union, potentially its most powerful opponent. First of all, however, it had to make sure of the area which comprised the Balkan states. The inclusion of Hungary, Romania and Bulgaria in the Triple Pact meant that the territories of these three countries became military bases for the invasion of the U.S.S.R. Since it had not succeeded in bringing Yugoslavia and Greece into the Triple Pact the Third Reich determined to launch an offensive against them.

The war with Yugoslavia represented a fresh juncture in Germany's plan of attack upon the Soviet Union since it required the engagement of new forces to crush and occupy Yugoslavia and Greece and meant a reduction in the military resources intended for the attack upon the U.S.S.R. Prior to its offensive against Yugoslavia and Greece the Third Reich therefore took steps to safeguard its military, strategic and economic interests, and those of its allies, Italy, Hungary and Bulgaria, in the Balkans. Thus Germany sought to reduce to a minimum the number of troops it would need to conquer the peoples of the Balkans. Hitler's plan for the partition of Yugoslavia was drawn up bearing in mind the pretensions of Germany's allies, the national question which had remained unresolved within the Kingdom of Yugoslavia and also the separatist aspirations of various reactionary bourgeois groups.

At their meeting in Vienna of 20th to 29th April 1941 the Foreign Minister of the Italian fascist government, Ciano, and the Foreign Minister of the Third Reich, von Ribbentrop, came to an agreement on the partition of Yugoslavia. It was then that the line of demarcation between the Bulgarian and Italian forces occupying Macedonia was drawn. According to the agreement the greater

part of Macedonia, the Morava Valley and the courses of the Nisava and Timok rivers in Serbia together with a part of Kosovo were to be awarded to Bulgaria, which also gained territory in Aegean Macedonia and in Thrace from Greece. Western Macedonia, including the towns of Tetovo, Gostivar, Kichevo, Debar and Struga, the district of Castoria and the majority of the Prespa villages were awarded formally to Albania but in fact to Italy. Thus, like Italy, Hungary and Bulgaria became Germany's military allies. This would enable the Supreme Command of the Third Reich once Yugoslavia and Greece were defeated, to free a significant number of its troops for the operations on the Eastern Front.

### *Appearance of the Bulgarian Central Action Committee*

At the same time that the German units arrived in Macedonia there also arrived in Skopje a number of former Macedonian political emigrants from Bulgaria. These, together with certain local figures, on 13 th April 1941 formed the "Central Action Committee" under the aegis of the German military authorities.

In the period from the arrival of the German troops to the Bulgarian occupation of Macedonia the Bulgarian Central Action Committee issued proclamations to the Macedonian people which aimed to represent the Bulgarian occupation as the Macedonian people's spontaneous desire for unification with Bulgaria. This was supposed to indicate to the German military authorities Bulgaria's "historical right" to Macedonia.

The committee extended its activities to both Aegean and Western Macedonia, which led to the formation in Tetovo and in certain other towns of Albanian committees which sought the incorporation of Skopje into Albania. Committees were also set up in some towns in the interior but their rôle was limited to that of maintaining law and order in those towns.

When Bulgarian political and administrative authorities were established in Macedonia, in May 1941, the Director of the Skopje region brought the work of the Bulgarian Central Action Committee to an end.

### *Military Occupation*

The Bulgarian government placed its entire army and territory at the service of the Third Reich. A section of the army was employed in the occupation of Yugoslavia and Greece and another was used to safeguard the frontier with Turkey and also the Black

Sea coast, which was organised as a German military base. To this end the Bulgarian government despatched the First Corps, of four divisions, to Serbia and the Fifth Army, of three divisions – later to be reinforced by a further division – to Macedonia and the Morava Valley.

In addition to these divisions two frontier brigades and special units whose task was to guard roads and various industrial objects were brought into play. The Bulgarian government also despatched the Second Corps, of three divisions, to the eastern part of Aegean Macedonia.

These troops were employed in the war against the liberation movements of the Macedonian, Serbian and Greek peoples. Equally, they acted as reserves for the German army which was defending the coast and the islands of the Aegean Sea.

The occupation of Macedonia involved the Bulgarian government in the engagement of various armed formations, such as the army, the police force and the gendarmerie, which were brought in from Bulgarian territory. The army and the police were also the executive agents in the terrorisation of the Macedonian people. Once the military occupation had begun a specially trained police force arrived in Macedonia, where it was organised into two regional administrations – in Skopje and in Bitola – three town headquarters – in Skopje, Bitola and Prilep – and twenty-one district administrations. The police force covered the entire area that was occupied by Bulgarian troops. Mobile units were also organised: military police detachments, a motorised police force and a squadron of mounted police. A police school was established in Skopje and a special police force instituted for the protection of mines. The infantry regiments contained hunters' detachments, which were battalions that specialised in fighting against the partisans. Towards the end of 1943 and at the beginning of 1944 gendarmerie battalions were also formed.

As the Macedonian people's liberation movement grew and gained strength the Bulgarian police and military occupation authorities tried to provoke fratricidal conflicts. They linked up with the armed formations of Drazha Mihailovich, regardless of the well-known disagreements between the Greater Serbian and Greater Bulgarian bourgeoisies which resulted from their respective aspirations towards Macedonia.

A special feature of the Bulgarian occupation of Macedonia was the fact that in addition to the Bulgarian armed forces there were also German units, commands and police as well as German economic organisations for the exploitation of mines. The German military and police forces were involved in the affairs of the Bulgarian occupation authorities through officers delegated to the headquarters of the larger Bulgarian military units and of the police.

They also had direct links with certain Bulgarian political figures.

The territory of Western Macedonia was occupied by Italian troops, to a strength of more than one division, and also gendarmerie, police, frontier guards and other similar units.

#### *Administration and Police Rule of the Occupiers*

The occupied part of Vardar Macedonia was divided by the Bulgarian authorities into two regions, those of Skopje and Bitola, with districts and municipalities as had been the case in Yugoslavia. In 1943 the Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad) region was established and the districts of Strumitsa, Berovo and Tsarevo Selo, formerly in the Skopje region, were attached to it.

At the same time that the administrative authorities were set up certain institutions, such as courts, regional financial directorates (the "Palaces of Accounts"), a central commissariat for supplies and certain inspectorates were established. A significant rôle in the administrative and political system of the occupation authorities was played by the headman (kmet – a village elder appointed by the authorities) as a front-line agent of these authorities.

The structure of the police authority was the same as that in Bulgaria. However, the number of police institutions, the authority invested in them and their relation to the governing bodies showed that the police force was all-powerful and that it played the dominant rôle in reinforcing the state rule of the occupier. The leading personnel and the majority of the officials had been brought from Bulgaria and they were the Bulgarian authorities' mainstay in Macedonia. Macedonians were conscripted to work in Bulgaria. The Bulgarian occupation authorities encountered an unmistakable Macedonian national consciousness. Certain delegates to the Bulgarian Assembly, therefore, when faced with resistance on the part of the Macedonian people from the very outset of the occupation, sought that the Bulgarian government should take measures against manifestations of Macedonian nationality. The Bulgarian authorities used the term "Bulgarians from Macedonia" when referring to the Macedonians.

Bulgarian rule in Macedonia was administered in such a way as not to appear as a special regime of occupation but rather as an extension of rule to territory which ought to be an integral part of Bulgaria. In addition to the enforcement of the entire body of Bulgarian legislature special laws were passed in connection with the implementation of the occupation system. Certain German firms with special privileges (for the exploitation of mines and tobacco)

were established in Macedonia even though it had been annexed by Bulgaria.

From May to June 1941, following the entry of Italian troops, the territory of Western Macedonia was an occupied zone of the Italian forces of occupation. On 17th May 1941 a decree by Mussolini regulated the administrative authorities of the occupation: civilian commissars, nominated by the Supreme Command, were appointed to the civil authorities. The function of Supreme Civilian Commissar lasted until 3rd December 1941. In July 1941 Western Macedonia was annexed to Albania, which had itself been occupied by Italy in 1940, and its administration was assumed by the Ministry for the "Newly-liberated" Albanian Lands. On the dissolution of this ministry, on 12th February 1943, its functions were taken over by the respective ministries of the quisling government in Albania.

The Italian occupiers consolidated their position by relying on the support of Greater Albanian elements. The occupiers represented themselves to the Albanian masses as "saviours" from the lawlessness and terrorisation of the non-national Yugoslav regimes. The Greater Albanian quislings adopted the same policy as that of the Bulgarians and the Italians, namely spreading hatred and hostility among the Macedonians, Albanians and Turks and kindling chauvinistic passions. The Italian occupiers filled the administrative, judicial and police systems with persons of Albanian descent. Fascists brought from Albania were appointed to the higher positions while the lower functions in the administrative system were carried out by local quislings.

An area sectional command, or prefecture, with its seat in Debar, and forty-eight municipalities, encompassing the districts of Kichevo, Rostusha, Gostivar, Tetovo, Struga and Debar, were set up in the Macedonian territory which was occupied by the Italian army and joined to Albania in 1941. Some six villages in the Ohrid district were attached to the Podgradets sub-prefecture which, like the Prespa sub-prefecture, came under the Korça prefecture. Later, in 1944, a further sectional command, or prefecture, was established with its seat in Tetovo. The prefecture was the highest administrative organ in western Macedonia.

In addition to the administrative system a police force and judiciary were set up. There was a gendarmerie, which was in Italian hands, as well as the Albanian civilian police, the *quaestura*, which indicates the special position occupied by Albania. Alongside the police force there were also the *carabinieri*. According to official ordinances the *carabinieri* were an organ of the prefectures but in fact they acted independently. Besides the *carabinieri* a special fascist police force, known as the "black-shirts", was set up in each municipality.

Bulgarian and Italian military, police, gendarmerie and other units in Vardar Macedonia constituted an armed force of some 120.000 men.

Aegean Macedonia east of the River Struma was annexed by Bulgaria. The central region was held by the German authorities. The western region, consisting of the districts of Castoria, Grevena and parts of the Kozhani and Lerin (Florina) districts, was held by the Italian authorities. The German and Italian occupation zones came under the jurisdiction of the Greek quisling government of General Chouglou.

The Macedonians in Pirin Macedonia remained in their pre-war situation within the Kingdom of Bulgaria.

#### *Relations between Italy and Bulgaria*

In the course of the occupation of Macedonia the demarcation line was altered several times to the advantage of the Bulgarians. On several occasions the Bulgarian government of the time underlined the fact that parts of Macedonia remained under Italian administration and posed the question of their being joined to Bulgaria, even in the region which had been allotted to Italy, using the argument that the line of demarcation as it existed was not suitable from a historical, strategic, or economic point of view.

The Italian occupation authorities also expressed dissatisfaction with the demarcation line and attempted to whet passions over it. Thus in May 1941 the Italian Consul in Skopje, aided by Greater Albanian elements, organised a demonstration in Skopje and sought that it should be incorporated into "Greater Albania".

As an outcome of the political manoeuvres over the question of the demarcation line Bulgarian troops occupied forty-four villages in the Tetovo district in 1941 and four villages in the Ohrid district in 1943 while they handed over nine villages in the Kichevo district to the Italians. In September 1943 at the time of the Italian capitulation Bulgarian troops were occupying twenty villages in the Prespa district as well.

#### *Economic Exploitation of Macedonia*

In the course of the war the occupation authorities put into effect a system which involved various measures for the intensive use of such natural resources as mines and forests and for the plundering of the population. Thus, for example, a low rate of one

to one on the dinar-lev exchange was introduced. The previous rate had been one to three in favour of the dinar. This enabled merchants and speculators from Bulgaria to make use of the low exchange value of the dinar to take control of all those goods that came their way. At the same time there was an unscrupulous plundering of the holdings of both Jews and Serbian settlers. The tobacco in the warehouses was seized as were the safes of the tobacco monopolies. Macedonian opium was bought up at very cheap prices and wheat and other foodstuffs requisitioned. A coupon system for the rationing of provisions for the population was instituted and producers were obliged to hand over their products to the state for minimal returns.

The occupiers of Western Macedonia facilitated the establishment and functioning of several commercial associations for the exploitation of natural resources.

Tithes, an institution well known from the days of Ottoman rule in Macedonia, were reintroduced in Italian-occupied Western Macedonia.

#### *Denationalisation Policy of the Occupiers*

The occupation of Macedonia was announced by the Bulgarian government as a natural expansion and an assumption of "its own national territories". For this purpose Bulgaria created a vast propaganda machine which was intended to play a particular rôle in the denationalisation process. The Bulgarian government executed a change of nationality, from Macedonian to Bulgarian, simply by issuing a decree to that effect.

Various "cultural" and other propaganda institutions also carried out a systematic denationalisation of the Macedonian people. Particularly strong pressures were exerted on the youth of Macedonia: Bulgaria's school system was in fact the most highly organised section of its denationalisation propaganda. The Bulgarian occupiers developed extensive propaganda against the pre-war Greater Serbian cultural and educational systems in Macedonia and moved in the direction of establishing a wide network of educational institutions covering virtually all the larger inhabited places in Macedonia.

The Bulgarian authorities made special efforts to collect as many Macedonian pupils as possible in their schools. On the other hand they adopted a policy of rendering impossible the schooling of the children of the Albanian, Turkish and other nationalities living in Macedonia. Thus, in the 1941-42 school year, they closed

down the Moslem schools which had been in existence since the time of the Yugoslav Kingdom.

During the academic year 1941-42 the Bulgarian government was making the necessary preparations to open a Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje and opened it in the school year 1943/44. The reason why so much time was devoted to the preparations was to ensure that students from Macedonia should first be educated in Bulgaria for a period of time in order to master the Bulgarian language.

The majority of the teaching staff were brought in from Bulgaria and had been specially chosen for their Greater Bulgarian and fascist attitudes. Educational personnel from Macedonia were either sent to work in Bulgaria or debarred from any employment. This was a similar situation to that which had obtained at the time of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia when teachers from Macedonia had been sent to Serbia, Montenegro, etc.

From the first, the teachers who were sent into Macedonia encountered serious opposition among the Macedonian people. In the schools and at the University a variety of protests were made against the denationalisatory teaching and educational programme and against the use of the Bulgarian language as the medium of teaching.

Special teaching programmes were drawn up which were supposed to ensure the denationalisation of the young people of Macedonia. Virtually all the teaching was concentrated on the group of subjects known as "Bulgarian Studies" (българознание): the Bulgarian language and national history.

The study of the Bulgarian language occupied not only the school pupils but also the adults. This was an extremely acute problem for the Bulgarian authorities as it made them realise that in occupied Macedonia they were dealing not with Bulgarians but with a separate people, the Macedonians.

A large number of Bulgarian scholarly and scientific institutions were involved in the work of the Directorate for National Propaganda. Their task was to prove to the public that Macedonia was Bulgarian territory and that the Macedonians were Bulgarians. Proofs of this were sought from philology, history and ethnology, and various works in the fields of both material and intellectual culture were published which represented the spirit and characteristics of the Macedonian people as "typically Bulgarian".

Skopje Radio, the press and the theatre occupied a special place in the denationalisation policy. Contributions to this were also made by numerous fascist and other public organisations. The church also played its part in this activity.

In line with this policy many delegations were despatched to Macedonia as transmitters of Bulgarian cultural and political life.

Various celebrations were organised the aim of which was to implant the notions of a supposedly common history and a single struggle in the consciousness of the Macedonian people. To this end numerous events from the shared struggle in the past against the Ottoman Empire were mis-represented in order to show that the national liberation struggle of the Macedonian people was in fact the struggle of the Bulgarian people.

The transmission of denationalisation through the educational system meant that school teachers, clergy and other cultural and educational personnel were obliged to report on the political disposition of the people and on how they viewed the Bulgarian authorities, to follow the movements of the partisan units and to report whether there was any other propaganda active among the population apart from Bulgarian propaganda. They had the special duty of charting the influence of the Communist Party among the masses. Thus the cultural and educational personnel became a part of the administrative and police systems.

In the occupied territory of western Macedonia a policy of denationalisation and discrimination against the Macedonian people was put into effect by the Italian occupation authorities. Signs on institutions and names even on private buildings were replaced by signs in Albanian and Italian. Telephone calls in languages other than Italian and Albanian were forbidden. Both surnames and first names of the non-Albanian population had to be altered to take on an Albanian form.

According to Mussolini's Decree of 17th May 1941, after the annexation of western Macedonia in July 1941 employees of the Yugoslav administrative system were called upon to return to their previous employment and were obliged to learn first Albanian and then Italian. Persons of non-Albanian descent were debarred from employment in the public services.

Schooling was the strongest part of the denationalisation policy in western Macedonia. Macedonian children had to attend Albanian schools. The teachers were imported from Albania but a considerable number of them were of an anti-fascist disposition. The schools were supposed to become centres for the dissemination of nationalism and chauvinism.

#### *Formation of Nationalist and Fascist Organisations and their Activities*

As soon as the Bulgarian system of occupation was established in Macedonia certain groups of citizens proffered their services to the Bulgarian authorities. While not rejecting their services,



Bogdan Filov's government treated them as "nationally sound forces" rather than as organised political groups. The Bulgarian government had no desire to tie itself to any particular political group in Macedonia, especially since it knew that such groups were weak and lacked popular support.

The Bulgarian government sought to win over the Macedonian people politically by forming fascist organisations. It laboured under the illusion that the Macedonian people, as a result of their difficult and inequitable situation during the period of the Yugoslav Kingdom, would support the policies of the Bulgarian bourgeoisie. To this end fascist and nationalist youth organisations, such as 'Defender' (Браник), 'Father Paisiy' (Отец Паисий), 'Legionaries' (Легионери) and 'Warriors' (Ратници), were set up. Among the citizenry at large other organisations were established, such as 'Fighters from the Front' (Бойци од фронтот), 'Home Guards' (Ополченици), 'Reserve Officers' (Резервни офицери), 'Hero' (Јунак) and 'Labour and Joy' (Труд и радост). The latter organisations totalled more than forty in number and they had their exponents in almost all parts of Macedonia. The Bulgarian authorities attempted unsuccessfully to involve members of the Ilinden Organisation in the propagandist activity. German-Bulgarian clubs, which operated as centres for Gestapo espionage, played a significant rôle in this activity.

The lack of political success on the part of these fascist and nationalist organisation drove Bozhilov's government to establish a new political organisation, known as "Public Force", in 1943. This organisation, established by means of a directive, had the set purposes of winning the people over to the government's policies, counteracting opposition to the occupation authorities in Macedonia, developing special activities so that the people would come to regard the Bulgarian authorities as their "liberators" and organising the fight against the national liberation movement.

The members of these numerous fascist, pro-fascist and nationalist organisations were generally people who had been brought to Macedonia from Bulgaria.

In the summer of 1944 the Bulgarian government began peace talks with the Allies but at the same time attempted, through the adherents of Chkatrov, Gyuzelov and Kitinchev, to establish an autonomous Macedonia under Bulgarian, i.e. German influence. Towards the end of the war, in August 1944, the Germans in Macedonia brought in Ivan (Vanko) Mihailov with a similar mission but after a brief period of counselling he left Macedonia.

Fascist organisations were also formed in western Macedonia. The Albanian Fascist Party (F.P.A.) played a rôle of considerable importance in spreading fascist organisations. This party had been hastily formed on Italy's occupation of Albania and was a

branch of the Italian Fascist Party. The Fascist Party gathered together young Albanians and Turks on a religious basis and amongst them stirred up hatred towards the non-Moslem population. Members of the S.I.M. (the Servizio Informatore Militare) infiltrated all the branches of the Fascist Party as did members of the military intelligence and counter-intelligence services.

The Italian forces of occupation made full use of backward elements among the Albanian people. They set up "voluntary" divisions composed of Albanians whom they had won over on a religious or nationalistic basis. These divisions terrorised those Macedonians, Albanians and Turks who were involved in the national liberation movement.

In the Autumn of 1942 there was formed in Albania a National Front, called the Balli Kombëtar. This was led by large-scale landowners, agas and beys who had contacts with reactionary elements abroad. This nationalistic organisation of armed formations had the ostensible purpose of opposing the occupation forces but its real purpose was to put down the liberation struggle of the Albanian people. A voluntary Albanian police was founded by special decree in August 1943 and worked in collaboration with the occupiers. This organisation signed an agreement with the Italian military command in Albania concerning the fight against the National Liberation Movement.

Gostivar was the centre of the Ballist organisation in western Macedonia.

In addition to the Ballist organisation and the Fascist Party, pro-fascist organisations were also founded. These included: 'Legaliteti', 'Zogu', 'Tasha', the children's organisation 'Ballili', the 'Avangardiste' organisation for youths of fourteen to seventeen and the 'Giovanni Fascists' for young people of over seventeen. After Italy's capitulation in 1943 these organisations placed themselves at the disposal of the German authorities in order thus to protect Greater Albanian interests.

Both the Italians and the Germans met with failure in their attempts to unite the reactionary forces in western Macedonia. As a result of internal contradictions among the Greater Albanians themselves two camps were formed. The one which had its centre in Debar had less strong contacts with the Germans while the other, based in Tetovo and Gostivar, consisted principally of Greater Albanians and Greater Serbians, directed by the German military authorities.

The occupiers' policy of founding these various fascist organisations, "voluntary" detachments and Ballist groups did not ultimately succeed in establishing a gulf between Macedonians, Albanians and Turks in this region.

The harsh position the workers found themselves in at this period allowed the occupiers to employ a small number of them in military factories both in Germany and in Bulgaria.

## THE START OF THE UPRISING

### *Overall Military and Political Situation in 1941*

On 22nd June 1941 the German armed forces began their offensives against the Soviet Union on a broad front. The element of surprise and their numerical and technical superiority gave the German armies a series of easy and rapid successes.

Although the Axis troops had certain marked successes on the African battlefield they failed, nevertheless, to capture the population centres of the Middle and Near East.

In the Far East, on 7th December 1941, the Japanese Air Force carried out a surprise attack on the American fleet in Pearl Harbour. This marked the start of the war between Japan and the United States of America and opened up a new front in the Pacific. On this front, as on the German-Soviet fronts, the engagements lasted for three years. In the Pacific Ocean the war was basically one of naval and air forces and on the Eastern Front of land forces. This brought Great Britain, the U.S.A. and the Soviet Union together, despite the differing socio-political systems of these three countries. Out of this there arose the Atlantic Charter, a statement made by Churchill, the British Prime Minister, and Roosevelt, the President of the United States of America. This laid down that territorial changes could only take place upon the free expression of the peoples concerned and that each people should itself decide upon the form of its own socio-political system.

### *Resistance to the Occupation and Preparations for Revolt*

With the collapse of the kingdoms of Yugoslavia and Greece a new stage in the national liberation struggle of the Macedonian people was reached. Its general characteristic was the national and social liberation of the people under the leadership of the respective Communist Parties. Of these Parties the Yugoslav Communist Party recognised both in theory and in practice the existence of

Macedonian nationality while the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists) and the Greek Communist Party had no firm position on the question. The Macedonian people were convinced that the realisation of the aims of the Communist Parties and the victory over fascism and capitalism would bring them national freedom and they participated on a massive scale in the uprising against their old and new overlords. The growth of the armed struggle varied because of specific conditions but in all three parts of Macedonia the people took the anti-fascist side in the fight.

Even before the April War the Yugoslav Communist Party had declared that it supported taking steps towards the defence of the country. In the course of the war itself the Party also took measures against fascist aggression. Thus, on 10th April 1941, at a sitting in Zagreb, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia resolved to organise a military committee, headed by the Secretary of the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party, Josip Broz Tito, and decided that some members of the Central Committee should set out for Bosnia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia to organise resistance against the fascist aggressors there.

In terms of its organisation the Communist Party of Yugoslavia had to adapt itself for this work in the circumstances of the occupation in order to lead the Yugoslav peoples in the struggle against their occupiers. To this end the May Counselling Session of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was held at which it was declared that for the struggle to be successful the Yugoslav peoples must be united on a broad political front.

The war on the Eastern Front was particularly important for the development of the resistance against the fascist occupiers. Following the attack on the Soviet Union the Communist Party of Yugoslavia considered it had an international duty to rise in defence of the first socialist state and to call on Communists and the proletariat to fight against fascism, the greatest enemy of the working class.

On 4th July 1941 the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia passed a resolution calling for an all-peoples' uprising. This enrolled the Yugoslav peoples in the ranks of the allies of the Soviet Union, Great Britain and the U.S.A. in the anti-Hitler coalition.

The specific conditions in which the Macedonian people found themselves dictated the path taken by the preparations for and development of their armed revolt. The Bulgarian occupiers, representing themselves as "liberators", attempted to exploit resistance on the part of the Macedonian people to the Greater Serbian bourgeoisie and so to disguise their own policy of conquest. The Italians, likewise, represented themselves as "liberators" of the

Albanians. However, the majority of the people were under no illusions as to the aims of the Bulgarian and Italian occupation forces. The field branches of the Communist Party appealed to the people's long experience and from the very outset of the occupation set about amassing arms and other military resources and took steps to reveal the occupiers in their true light.

The Secretary of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Macedonia, Metodi Shatorov-Sharlo, had long been absent from Macedonia and was in no position to grasp the true and extremely complex situation obtaining in Macedonia following the occupation of 1941. As a result the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia for Macedonia took a number of organisationally and politically false steps. For various reasons both subjective and objective the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists) was endeavouring to foist on the Party organisation in Macedonia its own views on resistance to fascism. Because the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists) was acting through "its own" state, which was at the time an ally of the German conquerors, its own position on the struggle against fascism was inappropriate to Macedonia in the existing conditions. The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia therefore, through the medium of the Comintern and the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists), took certain steps to remove the latter's influence on the Party organisation in Macedonia. In early September 1941 a new Regional Committee for Macedonia of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was formed, consisting of Lazar Kolishevski (Secretary), Mara Natseva, Borka Talevski, Blagoya Mucheto and Bane Andreev.

The Party organisation in Macedonia had to explain to the people through its political activity the aims of the armed resistance which the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was advocating. In view of the position of the Macedonian people and nationalities in pre-war Yugoslavia it was necessary to point out that the armed revolt was not for the restoration of pre-war Yugoslavia but for national and social liberation. The Party's unclouded view of the national problems and its history of struggle against the Greater Serbian bourgeoisie in the period before the Second World War were a guarantee that the struggle of the Yugoslav peoples was for new mutual relationships on a basis of full equality.

In September 1941 the necessary preparations for an armed uprising were already being carried out in different parts of Macedonia. A Regional Staff Headquarters for Macedonia was established (to be transformed into a Supreme Headquarters in 1942). It consisted of Lazar Kolishevski, Mihaylo Apostolski, Tsvetko Uzunovski, Mirche Atsev and Strasho Pindzhur. Partisan detachments were formed to facilitate the immediate preparations. Local

military headquarters were set up in Skopje, Veles, Kumanovo, Prilep, Bitola, Krushevo, Shtip, Strumitsa, Gevgeliya, Kavadarci, Negotino, Tetovo, Kichevo, Debar, Struga, Ohrid and Resen.

Thus, in addition to the Party Organisation and a popular auxiliary organisation, a network of military quarters was established for the immediate preparation and leadership of the armed struggle.

The occupiers found no support among the people. Left on their own they had to rely mainly on armed force and the system of occupation which they had brought with them. They encountered resistance in numerous forms, from failure to comply with their commands, the concealment of food supplies, the workers' fight for higher pay and protests against the use of the Bulgarian language to demonstrations against the Bulgarian occupation itself (e.g. in Strumitsa on 22nd April 1941), sabotage and other diversionary activities.

From the very start of the occupation the occupiers took steps to combat every manifestation of resistance. Inspections of the population were carried out at every entry to and exit from an inhabited place and they also sporadically implemented road blocks and exerted considerable pressure on the people by means of curfews. Arrests and sentences of imprisonment or death were carried out from the very outset. Immediately before the Ilinden national holiday (St. Elias' Day) in 1941 the occupiers arrested Communists and other progressives in all the towns as a preventive measure lest there should be any revolutionary activity on that day. Books in the Serbian language were burned. The propaganda of the occupiers was aimed at a distortion of the history of the Macedonian people.

### *The Start of the Armed Struggle*

The Party's field organisations used every appropriate occasion to create diversions aimed against the objects of the occupation. Special groups of diversionaries existed in Skopje, Veles, Prilep and Bitola. In the summer of 1941 some Party branches instituted military courses to train young people before they joined partisan detachments. Groups of diversionaries carried out a large number of armed actions against the occupying armies and police as, for instance, the destruction of German planes at Skopje Aerodrome in July 1941, the obtaining of explosives from the Radusha mine in August 1941 and the action at the Bogomila Tunnel in September 1941. After extensive military and political preparations the Skopje partisan detachment was formed at the end of Au-

gust 1941, the Prilep detachment in mid-September 1941 and the Kumanovo detachment on 12th October 1941.

The formation of these partisan units marked the start of a fresh stage in the national liberation struggle, the stage in which the Communist Party headed the revolutionary movement of the Macedonian people.

The announcement of the inception of this new stage in the Macedonian people's revolutionary struggle came in the form of a large-scale military action undertaken by the Prilep partisan detachment on 11th October 1941. Simultaneous attacks were launched upon the Bulgarian police sectional headquarters, the prison and the telephone and telegraph network in Prilep. The Skopje and Prilep units carried out a number of actions directed against the Bulgarian police and armed forces but the Kumanovo detachment was dispersed at the very outset of its activity in the course of several conflicts with the Bulgarian army and police.

In Pirin Macedonia Macedonians were to be found in the front lines of the Bulgarian anti-fascist resistance movement. Among the leading communist circles in Pirin Macedonia there was a clearly held view that a revolutionary and democratic change in the political situation in Bulgaria could be reached through a mass armed anti-fascist struggle. The Pirin Macedonians had a real interest in such a change because of their situation of socio-economic and national deprivation. In the summer of 1941 resistance in this part of Macedonia began to assume a new character, that of an armed struggle supported by the entire population.

The struggle in Pirin Macedonia was the outcome of a continuing process of revolt against the denationalisation policy adopted towards Macedonians and the harsh socio-economic situation but it also showed the influence of a larger revolutionary tradition. This was the tradition of Sandanski and the Serres Left; of a mass Left-wing orientation following the partition of Macedonia and demonstrated in the Communist Party's victories in parliamentary and local elections from 1919 to 1923 in the Pirin district; and in the success of the September Uprising in the district of Razlog. An illustration of the dominance of the Left in Pirin Macedonia was to be seen in the fact that the only organised political parties in the area with their own field network were the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists) and the Agrarian League. The bourgeois and petit-bourgeois parties had only a handful of scattered supporters and did not count as an organised political force. In addition many leaders and activists from the I. M. R. O. (United) were active in the field as Communist Party leaders or activists. They commanded particular respect and authority among the people as they were actively pressing for a solution of the Macedonian question as

one of the principal conditions for the involvement of the mass of the people in the armed struggle.

On the replacement of the gravely ill Grozdan Nikolov by Nikola Parapunov as Secretary of the Regional Committee in July 1941 the orientation towards armed struggle in Pirin Macedonia became a matter of prime importance.

The Central Committee of the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists) considered Parapunov's action for the formation of partisan groups to be premature and not in accord with the Party's overall line on resistance. The Party envisaged organised resistance only in the form of diversionary and sabotage actions in the larger towns. With regard to the incorporation of parts of Macedonia into Bulgarian territory the Party leadership adopted the position that "classical" conditions for an armed partisan war did not exist in Bulgaria and, therefore, diversionary and sabotage activities were adequate. Parapunov, taking as his point of departure the specific conditions of Pirin Macedonia, pursued his activity of organising an armed struggle.

The first partisan group in Pirin Macedonia was formed by Ivan Kozarov, a participant in the September Uprising, a years-long Party activist and one of the organisers of the I. M. R. O. (United). Five days after the German attack on the Soviet Union, on 27th June 1941, Kozarov went into action against the police in his native village. Kozarov's attack was the first organised armed action in Pirin Macedonia. At the same time Parapunov's and Kostadin Kantardzhiev's partisan groups were also beginning to take action. Soon afterwards other Party activists and former I. M. R. O. (United) leaders joined the partisans and played an active rôle as commandants or commissars of partisan groups and detachments.

The Macedonians of Aegean Macedonia had also been subjected to a harsh regime of denationalisation, that of the Greek authorities, particularly during the period of the Metaxas dictatorship. After the occupation of Greece the Macedonians found themselves sharing the fate of the Greek people under new overlords. Although dissatisfied with the pre-war regime in Greece they took a large part in the Graeco-Italian War of 1940-41. In that war Macedonian regiments fought against the Italian fascists as they saw in fascist conquest an even blacker form of bondage.

In a large number of villages the Macedonians of Aegean Macedonia offered spontaneous resistance to the new occupation regime which gave a signal to the masses for a general struggle against the fascist occupiers.

After the attack on the Soviet Union the Greek Communist Party intensified its activities in Aegean Macedonia and undertook preparations for an armed struggle against the occupation forces.

These preparations were accompanied by diversionary activities and various other forms of resistance. The preparatory measures included the formation of the Elefteria and Ieros Lohos organisations whose Greek nationalist platforms meant that they did not enjoy a great deal of sympathy among the Macedonian people. Nevertheless Communist Macedonians were to be found in their ranks.

In the course of the summer of 1941 the Greek Communist Party established partisan groups throughout Aegean Macedonia. In July and August groups were formed in the districts of Kukush (Kilkis) and Nigrita and then in the districts of Mt. Payak and Kailari (Ptolemaida). By September these groups had already gone into action. Partisan groups were also organised in the districts of Kostur (Kastoria), Lerin (Florina) and Voden (Edessa).

In order to put down partisan and diversionary activity and other forms of resistance the occupation authorities used terrorisation and persecution accompanied by mass killings in the districts of Kostur (Kastoria), Meglen, Kukush (Kilkis) and Serres and a large number of villages were hurned to the ground.

In September the National Liberation Front (E. A. M.) was formed on an initiative from the Greek Communist Party. It embraced, in addition to the Greek Communist Party and the Communist Youth Organisation (O.K.N.K.), the People's Democratic Union, the Agrarian Party, the Workers' Socialist Party, the United Anti-fascist Trades Unions and other progressive organisations. Its programme was a narrow one: the expulsion of the occupiers from the country and the achievement of Greek integrity. Nothing was said in the E. A. M. Programme about the future situation of the Macedonians. In September 1941 the Communist Party of Greece appealed to Macedonians to join the national liberation struggles of the Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian peoples as only that would guarantee their national liberation. This was borne out in December 1942. Although it was not sufficiently clear such an appeal from the Greek Communist Party nevertheless gave a certain hope to the Macedonian people that a struggle in alliance with the Greek, Serbian and Bulgarian peoples would bring them national freedom.

The major event of 1941 was the Drama Uprising in which Greeks, Macedonians and the various nationalities living in the area took part.

The Drama Uprising began on the night of 28th/29th September 1941. In the engagements of 29th and 30th September and 1st October 1941 the Bulgarian army and police put down the uprising by means of a massacre of about three thousand people in Drama and its surroundings and other reprisals throughout the entire territory of the eastern part of Aegean Macedonia.

The Greek National Liberation Army (E.L.A.S.) was formed in December 1941 and gradually developed into a full national liberation armed force.

Together with the other nationalities in all three parts of Macedonia the Macedonian people began their armed struggle with the events of 1941, seeing in it the one and only way to achieve national and social liberation.

## DEVELOPMENT OF REVOLT IN 1942

### *Overall Situation at the Fronts*

From december 1941 to the end of 1942 the military and political situation throughout the world was marked by events which were of particular significance to the course of the Second World War.

On The Eastern Front the German advance was halted before Moscow in December 1941 but in the summer of 1942 German troops penetrated deep into Soviet territory towards Leningrad and Stalingrad. The German summer offensive of June to November 1942 was not, however, successful. It was broken by the Battle of Stalingrad (November 1942 to 2nd February 1943), a decisive battle and turning-point in the war against Hitler.

In the African battlefield the Axis troops were on the retreat after the Battle of El Alamein and lost Cyrenaica.

In the Far East the Japanese succeeded in the first half of 1942 in capturing a large amount of territory (Malaya, the Philippines, Borneo and Sumatra) and in invading Burma and New Guinea. In Washington on 1st January 1942 twenty-six countries signed a declaration of war upon the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis.

In the course of 1942 anti-fascist resistance against the occupiers was growing in many European countries.

On 12th December 1941 Bulgaria, as a member of the Triple Pact, had declared war on Great Britain and the U.S.A.

The struggle against the occupiers flared up in Yugoslavia towards the end of 1941. Partisan military detachments scored marked successes and by 1942 were in the field with a proletarian brigade, sixty-two detachments and nine independent battalions as well as various other units.

In the course of 1942 the number of partisan units and brigades in Yugoslavia increased rapidly. Divisions and corps were for-

med. The first session of AVNOJ, the supreme political organ of the national liberation struggle of the Yugoslav peoples, was held on 26th and 27th November 1942.

#### *Formation of New Partisan Detachments in Vardar Macedonia*

A Party Counselling Session, attended by some twenty-five delegates, was held in Skopje on 7th January 1942. The session reached the conclusion that the aim of the partisan units was to fight for the achievement of the Macedonian people's national freedom by extending the liberation struggle. It emphasized the need for political and organisational penetration into the countryside as one of the pre-conditions for successful partisan activity.

In March 1942 the Macedonian Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Regional Staff Headquarters issued a directive on the organisation of new partisan detachments and declared that armed struggle was the one and only way to achieve freedom.

Before the units themselves had been formed the Regional Staff Headquarters established an Operational Staff Headquarters, consisting of Kiril Krstevski-Platnik, Trayko Boshkovski-Tarzan and Pero Ivanov-Tikvarot, for the direct leadership of the partisan units in the area that included Veles, Krushevo, Prilep, Bitola and Resen.

Despite the tactical failures of partisan units in 1941 six new partisan units were formed in the first half of 1942, as a result of the activity to win over the mass of the people politically, in the Bitola, Skopje, Veles, Prilep, Krushevo and Bitola-Prespa districts. This was a testimony to the political successes of 1941 and to the fact that the armed struggle had been accepted by the masses as the one and only road to national and social freedom.

On the formation of the partisan detachments the Bulgarian army of occupation and police were mobilised so that the detachments found themselves involved in engagements from the very moment of their inception. The fighters and leaders of the detachments were in the main young and without any basic knowledge of military affairs, a fact which rendered their situation even more difficult. Nevertheless, in the engagements on Mts. Lisets and Pelister and elsewhere the partisan units had considerable military success which was, in turn, a marked political success.

#### *Armed Conflict in Aegean and Pirin Macedonia*

On the appearance of the first partisan groups in Pirin Macedonia in 1942 the Bulgarian fascists took widespread reprisals and terrorised the population. Despite this, political activity increased in the Nevrokop, Petrich and Sveti Vrach districts and a large number of Party and Party Youth activists were preparing to join the partisans.

The pace at which the anti-fascist struggle had been initiated in Aegean Macedonia in 1941 was sustained throughout 1942 and the struggle, based on the Greek Communist Party and E. A. M.'s conception of the liberation struggle, assumed forms commensurate with the current military and political situation.

The Greek Communist Party and E. A. M.'s greatest success in 1942 was to win over and organise the majority of the population in Aegean Macedonia and Greece. E.L.A.S. extended its organisational network throughout the entire territory.

The formation in April 1942 of a partisan detachment composed largely of Macedonians at the Monastery of the Holy Trinity in the Koreshta, Kostur (Castoria) region was of particular significance to the mobilisation of Macedonians in Aegean Macedonia in the struggle against the occupiers. The Macedonian revolutionary Lazo Trpovski was present at its formation in his capacity as instructor from the Regional Committee for Aegean Macedonia of the Greek Communist Party, which played an initiatory rôle in the establishment of partisan units. This served as a guarantee of the forthcoming mobilisation of the Macedonians in the struggle against the occupation. At this same time a Macedonian partisan unit was established in the Pole, Kostur (Castoria) region.

In the summer of 1942 partisan groups were also formed in the mountain regions of Karakamen, Voden (Edessa) and Ber (Verria) and in other parts of Aegean Macedonia.

#### *Flare-up of the Armed and Other Forms of Struggle*

Under pressure from the Party's field organisations a Temporary Macedonian Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia was elected. It consisted of Tsvetko Uzunovski, Mirche Atsev, Lyupcho Arsov, Tsvetan Dimov and Mara Natseva.

The Temporary Regional Committee devoted particular attention to organising the armed struggle. It carried out certain alterations and renamed the Regional Military Headquarters as the Supreme Headquarters of the N.O.P.O. (National Liberation Parti-



san Detachments) of Macedonia. This body consisted of Mihaylo Aposhtolski, Tsvetko Uzunovski, Mirche Acev, Strasho Pindzhur and Lyupcho Arsov. In June 1942 it issued a directive concerning the organisation and method of action of the partisan detachments.

In the first half of 1942 the partisan detachments were engaged in activity to develop their political propaganda. From July, in accordance with the Supreme Headquarters' directive, they increased their military activity. Thus a change was brought about in partisan tactics. From having been predominantly involved in political activities they went over to large-scale military actions directed against objects belonging to the Bulgarian occupiers. Of such a nature were the attacks upon the Smilevo District Administration on 2nd August, the Tser mine on 7th and 8th September, the Pletvar District Administration on 13th August and the engagements at Kriva Krusha on 28th August, at Foynitsa on 14th September, at Mukos also on 14th September and near the Mateyche Monastery.

From July to September 1942 the partisan detachments' military actions developed along the following lines: destruction of the occupiers' authority in the field, setting fire to records offices, actions directed against village head-men and other collaborators with the occupation forces and hindrance of requisitions and tax collections. Concurrent with these activities there was also an intensification of political activity among the people.

In the autumn of 1942 the Supreme Headquarters carried out a reorganisation of partisan detachments. New and larger partisan units were formed. Their military actions took on a new direction: the destruction of railway trains, lines and station offices, the severing of telephone lines and the destruction of mines and everything which served the German occupiers in their prolongation of the war.

The occupiers' counter-actions followed the activity of the partisan detachments. Up to August 1942 they had been in the form of pursuit of the partisans whenever they appeared. From September 1942, however, they were on a larger scale and involved all the different sections of the army.

As part of the war against the partisans the occupiers established military garrisons in a large number of villages and rural district centres. The rural garrisons were from a platoon to a company in strength. Members of both the military and civil police forces were included in them.

New regiments were drawn up and incorporated into the ranks of the Bulgarian Fifth Army. Thus the divisions were increased to the size of three infantry regiments each. Aircraft intended exclusively for the war against the partisan detachments were allotted to the Fifteenth Division.

The police force was strengthened and the motorised and mounted police especially were kept in a state of mobilisation.

In 1942 the occupiers endeavoured to set up counter-units specially designed for the war against the partisans and with the aim of sparking off a civil war. The unity of the Macedonian people, however, foiled these attempts and during the entire War of National Liberation only some eight such counter-units, of twenty to thirty men each, were formed by the occupiers. These units were composed of members of the police force, terrorists and declassed elements largely brought in from Bulgaria.

At first the occupiers employed their strengthened forces in blockades directed against the partisan detachments. The partisans, however, succeeded in penetrating these encirclements and carried out various surprise attacks upon objects belonging to the occupiers.

In line with the plan of the Supreme Headquarters the Yané Sandanski Partisan Detachment was formed on 8th September 1942 above the village of Lavtsi near Bitola and the Dimitar Vlahov Detachment, of four companies, from the Veles Detachment and from one company of the Prilep Detachment was formed on 22nd September on Mt. Gabrovska. Subsequently, on 6th and 7th November, the first company of the Gyorché Petrov Detachment was formed at Tsrveni Steni near Prilep. The Mavrovo Partisan Detachment was also formed in the autumn of 1942 on Mt. Bistra near Mavrovo.

The activities of the partisan detachments resulted in an offensive action on the part of the Bulgarian occupiers in the autumn of 1942 in the area lying between the River Vardar and Lake Ohrid and between Skopje and the Greek-Yugoslav border.

From the autumn until the close of 1942 the Pitu Guli Partisan Detachment from Krushevo, the Damé Gruev Detachment from Bitola and Prespa and the Yané Sandanski Detachment all came under daily attack from this Bulgarian offensive in which the majority of the Bulgarian Fifth Army (of two divisions and cavalry and other units) and the entire Bulgarian police force in Macedonia, reinforced by police from Bulgaria, took part. The partisan detachments were compelled to wage a daily war and to penetrate these encirclements to enter settlements for food and to realise their basic task of striking blows against the occupiers.

The high point of the offensive was the concentration of Bulgarian troops from the Veles and Prilep garrisons against the Dimitar Vlahov Detachment in October 1942 in the area between Prilep and Veles. This was known as the Babuna Action.

From September 1942 to January 1943 the partisan detachments carried out numerous actions and fought in such engagements as, for example: the severing of the telephone lines at Bogo-

mila on 22nd September; the action at the village of Kochishta on 25th September, the action at the village of Nezhilovo on 27th September; the destruction of equipment at Klayman Railway Station on 27th September; the attack on the Chashka district administration on 29th September; the action in the village of Desovo on 7th October; actions in the villages of Drenovo, Paligrad, Aldintsi, Kolichani and Zelenikovo near Skopje and engagements at Foy-nitsa Cave and Bashino Village.

During this lengthy offensive the partisans had considerable military and political success but also suffered perceptible losses.

The occupiers managed to deal serious blows to the partisans and also to the organs of the war in the towns and villages. Their success was particularly marked in the area from Prilep to Veles and Skopje to the extent that they rendered impossible the renewal of the partisan detachments in that area in 1943.

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In 1942 the formation and activity of partisan groups were also intensified in the districts of Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad), Nevrokop and Petrich. They carried out attacks on village police stations and killed various notorious traitors. The attack on the headquarters of the German garrison in Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad) had a marked effect on the population both of the town itself and of the neighbouring villages.

In Aegean Macedonia in addition to other forms of resistance such as strikes partisan detachments began undertaking armed engagements.

The most important of these were, unquestionably, the attacks by the partisan group from Mt. Payak (Arachne) on the railway station and bridge over the River Vardar near the township of Boymnitsa on 3rd December and on the molybdenum mine at Changa (Mavrodendron) where they destroyed part of the installations and obtained a large quantity of explosives on 7th December 1942.

In 1942 the major concern in Aegean Macedonia was in political activity aimed at winning over the masses to the aims of the War of National Liberation. Despite the people's readiness for armed struggle the Greek Communist Party remained indecisive in the matter of selecting the forms to be taken by the armed uprising and offered no prospects of the mobilisation of the Macedonians, the faithful ally of the Greek proletariat and of the Party itself.

Despite this situation the majority of the Macedonian people in Aegean Macedonia were carrying on the anti-fascist struggle together with the Greek people in the hope that through their joint efforts conditions favourable to the realisation of the Macedo-

nians' legitimate right to self-determination and national freedom would be realised.

The fact that the occupiers were forced to use a large number of military and police formations and to involve virtually the entire occupation system against the partisans indicates that the partisan units represented a serious military factor against which large military units had to be engaged. This fact shaped the future tasks of the revolutionary leaders in Macedonia: the spreading of the revolt, the strengthening of the National Liberation Front, the expansion of the network of the organs of the war, the enlargement of the partisan detachments and the intensification of sabotage and diversionary actions and other forms of the war.

In view of the strong occupation offensive the Regional Committee and the Supreme Headquarters directed the detachments in December 1942 gradually to transfer their activities to the areas of Macedonia under Italian occupation where conditions were more favourable to such activity.

In realising this plan the Gyorché Petrov Detachment suffered heavy losses in the engagement near Prilepets Monastery on 20th December 1942. Despite a number of attempts the Dimitar Vlahov Detachment did not succeed in transferring its activities to a different terrain and in December 1942 and January 1943 it too suffered considerable losses. One section of the Krushevo Detachment did manage to transfer to Kichevo.

The Damé Gruev and Yané Sandanski Partisan Detachments crossed into the Prespa Region of Macedonian territory under Italian occupation where they developed considerable activity in 1943. The Skopje and Mavrovo Detachments remained in the regions where they had been formed.

The Shar Mountains Partisan Detachment, formed in 1942 as the Kosovo and Metohiya Detachment, gradually became a base for new fighters from Kosovo and Metohiya, from the Tetovo, Skopje and Veles regions and even from eastern Macedonia.

In 1942 partisan activities covered the whole of Macedonia. The detachments developed large-scale military and political activities and transformed their regions of activity into free territories where the organs of the war were the local authorities and the rule of the occupiers was broken. The free territory of the Dimitar Vlahov Detachment, which included the area from Prilep to Veles and Skopje, was particularly notable in this respect.

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In addition to the activity of the partisan detachments the war against the occupiers in 1942 involved various other forms of resistance in which the whole population participated. Assassina-

tions of the most obvious exponents of the occupation rule were organised. The Regional Committee organised workers' strikes in 1942 in different regions of Macedonia: on the roads from Gostivar to Debar, from Kichevo to Debar and from Kichevo to Struga and in Krushevo, on the railway line from Kochani to Delchevo and in the Mariovo mica mine. They also organised sabotage activities, particularly in the monopolies, and the burning of wheat in the fields and on state holdings.

Virtually the entire Macedonian population was involved in these various forms of resistance. In not a single action could the occupiers rely on local people. In actions aimed at putting down resistance they had to rely exclusively on the system and personnel they had brought with them from Bulgaria.

### *Strengthening of the Organs of the War*

In the course 1941 and 1942 the process of forming mass political organisations and organs of the war, such as the National Liberation Fund, National Liberation Committees, the National Liberation Front, the Women's Anti-fascist Front and the Anti-fascist Youth organisation, was intensified.

In 1941 the Yugoslav Communist Party organisations formed National Aid Committees in the towns. In the course of the preparations for the uprising the National Aid Committees, together with the other war organs and the partisan detachments, collected arms, munitions and supplies of food and clothing and other forms of assistance for prisoners.

In 1942 National Liberation Fund expanded its activities among all social layers of the people – workers, tradesmen, shopkeepers, women, young people and the intelligentsia – and included members of the Albanian, Turkish and Vlach nationalities as well as Macedonians. The Regional Committee directed the work of the National Liberation Fund through local committees. Sub-committees were formed on a professional and territorial basis in the larger towns of Skopje, Veles, Prilep and Kumanovo. Thus there existed in the towns carpenters', tailors', barbers', chickpea-sellers', grocers' and other shopkeepers' national aid sub-committees. There were also sub-committees in the monopolies and factories. Neighbourhood national aid sub-committees were active too in the towns. Women were mostly involved in the last-mentioned.

The national aid committees collected money and materials and were politically active among the masses, attempting ideologically to involve every citizen in the war.

In 1942, in addition to the local military headquarters in the towns, the process began of forming military committees (in the Prilep and Krushevo districts), secret committees (in the Veles district), military sub-committees (in the Prespa district) and committees (in the Skopje district). In view of different popular traditions these organs of the war appeared under different names.

In certain regions the committees and other similar organs of the war carried out the functions of organs of the new people's authority. They resolved various disputes among the people. In many villages, especially in Azot, the military and secret committees were the only organs of the war and served as a base for the gradual formation of mass political organisations such as the Women's Anti-fascist Organisation, the Youth Organisation and the National Liberation Front.

In September the war organs began to be reorganised as National Liberation Committees. Under various names these were functioning throughout Macedonia in the course of 1942. Their activity made possible in the second half of 1942 the process of forming higher organs – ward committees – and at the same time the taking of steps towards the formation of a Central Macedonian National Liberation Committee.

Realising the significance of the place and rôle of women in the national liberation struggle the Party Organisation paid special attention to the organisation and liaison of women's activities. These were directed and co-ordinated by means of commissions for women's work and the women's anti-fascist committees. In addition to local committees of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia women's commissions were formed in all the towns.

In all its activities the Party also paid particular attention to young people. The mobilisation of young people in the national liberation movement was achieved through the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia. In grammar schools, factories and other places where there was a concentration of young people separate leaderships of the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia were established which aimed at the effective involvement of young people in the national liberation struggle. The results of this activity were such that young people constituted about eighty per cent of the membership of the partisan detachments.

The Anti-fascist Youth Organisation offered strong resistance to the occupiers' policy. It resisted the use of the Bulgarian language and the falsification of the history of the Macedonian people in schools. Pupils expressed their resistance to the occupiers' educational policy in demonstrations and strikes. At the start of the 1941/42 school year this reached the point of conflicts between young people of school age and the transmitters of denationalisation in the schools.

The National Liberation Front in Macedonia was built up at the same time as an expression of the concrete need for the involvement of all layers of the people in the War of National Liberation. These various layers of the people and of the different nationalities were thus united through a variety of activities in a single front.

#### *Activities of Collaborators with the Occupation*

The Italian and Bulgarian occupiers pursued a policy of attracting collaborators but the results of this were meagre in the extreme. They only managed to find a handful of people in each town who would act as collaborators in the transmission and organisation of the occupation system. The local collaborators in the territory occupied by Bulgaria consisted of the groups centred on Chkatrov, Gyuzelov, Kitinchev and the Mihailovist I.M.R.O. and the very limited membership of the fascist organisations set up by the Bulgarian authorities.

On 4th and 5th July 1942 the group centred on Chkatrov and Gyuzelov drew up a petition to the Bulgarian czar. In it they represented the divided nature of Macedonia, the absence of Macedonian delegates in the Bulgarian Assembly, the question of agrarian reform, the shortcomings of the occupation authorities, the chaos in the matter of provisions, the brutality of the police, the bureaucracy of officials and the indifference of the local intelligentsia – all from a Greater Bulgarian point of view.

This group attempted to arm certain peasants and even whole villages and to organise them in a fight against the partisan detachments. They were also the initiators of the organisation of counter-bands which were supposed to stir up civil war.

The supporters of Vancho (Ivan) Mihailov made their appearance as advisors in connection with measures to be taken by the Bulgarian authorities in the war against the Communist Party and the partisan detachments. They visited Mihailov in Zagreb in 1942.

In 1942 some Macedonian political emigrants in Bulgaria carried out various activities in support of the Greater Bulgarian regime. The Bulgarian authorities formed the leaderships of various organisations which they set up from among their ranks. Certain Macedonian emigrants joined the counter-bands.

Local collaborators, regardless of which group they belonged to, were used by the occupation authorities. Nevertheless, the Bulgarian government did not allow these groups to play a leading rôle or to organise themselves as political organisations. The government skilfully exploited all the various contradictions and disagreements among the local collaborators.

In Aegean Macedonia the Bulgarian fascists had already succeeded in organising a Bulgarian Club in Thessaloniki in 1941. They also sent officers to liaise with the headquarters of the German garrisons in Thessaloniki, Voden (Edessa), Lerin (Florina) and Kostur (Castoria). Thus, in addition to its occupation of the eastern parts of Aegean Macedonia, the Bulgarian government gained the right to spread Greater Bulgarian propaganda among the Macedonians in the central and western districts.

In 1942 and 1943 the Bulgarian Club in Thessaloniki extended its activities to cover the whole of Aegean Macedonia. Making skilful play with the harsh situation of the people under the former Greek authorities, they managed to gain a certain amount of influence over some groups of the Macedonian population.

In the Kostur (Castoria) region the Bulgarian authorities, with the assent of the Italian authorities, formed a committee with the purpose of creating counter-revolutionary formations which would fight against the E.L.A.S. units. This committee, however, was shortlived.

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The Yugoslav royal government in exile expressed a lively interest in the development of events in Macedonia as the Macedonian People's War of National Liberation was a major threat to the imperialist purposes of the Greater Serbian bourgeoisie vis-a-vis Macedonia. The Yugoslav royal government, therefore, attempted to extend Drazha Mihailovich's organisation to those regions of Macedonia where Greater Serbian propaganda had been most strongly developed in the past.

In 1941 Mihailovich's bands managed to infiltrate several of their supporters into the Kozyak region and in 1942 sent Voyno Trbich, as an emissary of Drazha Mihailovich, to Azot and Poreche where he collected together an extremely small number of people with Greater Serbian sympathies.

The occupation authorities put no obstacles in the path of Mihailovich's men since they were working hand in hand with the German and Bulgarian occupiers in Serbia.

The Greater Serbian platform of Mihailovich's organisation found no support among the Macedonian people save in the case of those who had material links with Greater Serbianism and those whom it managed to seduce into supporting it.

### *Occupation Propaganda and Popular Resistance*

Although the occupation authorities had managed to decimate the partisan detachments in 1941 they in no way removed the Macedonian people's reasons for engaging in an armed struggle. On 15th January 1942 the entire personnel of the occupation system, military, civilian and educational, received an order to be in readiness for an offensive action.

In 1942 the Bulgarian Directorate of National Propaganda intensified its activity. In addition to the newspaper 'Bulgaria Entire' (Целокупна България) which was published in Skopje the 'Pelistier Echo' (Пелистерско ехо) came out in Bitola.

The organs of the authorities began to exert very considerable pressure. Families of members of the partisans had their provisions coupons confiscated; pupils who would not join the Fascist Guard organisation (Браник) were excluded from schooling; workers who would not join the state's Work and Happiness organisation (Труд и радост) were dismissed; and tradesmen who did not join the guild organisations were unable to obtain the most basic materials for their work.

As they had encountered no support among the people the occupiers engaged their entire administrative, police and educational personnel in keeping account of the disposition of the masses. Village headmen and district administrators were charged with finding 'pure Bulgarians' in their areas from among the ranks of members of the Ilinden Organisation, militia men, ex-outlaw leaders and members of bands. Arms were supplied to certain villages but the headmen could not find people to whom to distribute them nor were they able to recruit people for the intelligence service. Those who received arms simply handed them over to the partisan detachments.

Among the forms of the pressure which was being put upon the people were the introduction of a curfew in towns and villages and the restriction and control of movement outside settlements. The country was thus transformed into a prison camp in which the occupiers enjoyed an unlimited authority.

The application of pressure, terrorisation, internment and large-scale killings did not, however, succeed in destroying the national liberation movement in Macedonia. On the contrary, people were attracted to and involved in it all the more. The Bulgarian Parliament reviewed the situation in Macedonia on a number of occasions. The Bulgarian occupiers represented the Macedonian people's resistance as the work of the Serbian authorities and as resulting from a lack of the right tactics on the part of the Bulgarian occupation authorities – although they were aware that its causes

lay in the people's readiness to fight for national and social freedom.

In 1942 the national liberation movement involved the whole of Macedonia and serious armed conflicts were taking place in the majority of its territory. The battle to win over the broad mass of the people was proving highly effective. In the process of the anti-fascist war mass political organisations were being formed and were developing in the shape of the organs of the war. Their ranks included people from all social categories and all the nations and nationalities living in Macedonia. The Communist Party had united all the anti-fascist forces in a single front which was to be the base for the future development of the liberation struggle. Resistance to the occupiers became widespread and was manifested in a large variety of forms: from the armed activities of the partisan detachments and groups of diversionaries through various forms of sabotage, demonstrations and strikes to protest over work and bread.

In 1942 the national liberation movement was confirmed as a movement which was fighting for national and social liberation and against the occupiers and their collaborators, against the re-instatement of pre-war Yugoslavia and against the return to power of the Balkan bourgeoisies. Towards the close of 1942 there developed among the masses a consciousness that a new Yugoslavia would be organised as an equal state of all the nations and thus of the Macedonians too. The First Session of A.V.N.O.J. in Bihach was a guarantee of this. In Pirin and Aegean Macedonia the Macedonians were convinced, in view of the fact that the uprisings were being led by the Communist Parties, that they would achieve the right to national and social freedom and the right to self-determination.

### **OUTBREAK OF THE UPRISING**

#### *Victories of the Anti-fascist Coalition*

Towards the close of 1942 and in 1943 the powers of the anti-Hitler coalition won victories which proved a turning-point in the development of the war. After the German defeat at Stalingrad (19th September 1942 – 2nd February 1943) and the successful offensive of the western Allies in North Africa (November 1942 – January 1943) the Axis powers found themselves in extremely difficult straits. At the fronts the initiative passed into the hands of the anti-Hitler coalition and a period of constant advance began for

them. By the end of 1943 the Red Army had won back large areas of Soviet territory and British and American troops had expelled the German and Italian forces from Africa and invaded first Sicily and then Italy. A result of these victories was the fall of Mussolini and the consequent signing of an armistice between the Allies and Italy (9th September 1943). In 1943 the U.S.A.'s operations in the Pacific were also developing successfully.

The European resistance movements showed a general marked intensification.

In 1943 the Yugoslav people's armed struggle represented an important front in Europe and one on which the occupiers were engaging large forces. The Allies in the anti-Hitler coalition were beginning to see in it a factor which had a definite contribution to make to the overall victory. In the course of the war the foundations were being laid of a new state unit led by the Anti-fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (AVNOJ).

Towards the end of 1942 in addition to a large number of smaller units the National Liberation Army of the Yugoslav peoples included two corps, eight divisions, thirty-one brigades and thirty-six partisan detachments and had a total of 150,000 fighters.

The general situation at the fronts made an intensification of the Macedonian people's struggle possible.

In the course of preparations for the expansion of the national liberation movement in the second half of February 1943 Svetozar Vukmanovich Tempo, who was to play a significant rôle in the future development of the revolt, arrived in Macedonia as a delegate from the Central Committee of the Yugoslav Communist Party and the Supreme Headquarters of the National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan Detachments.

In the spring of 1943 several organisational measures associated with the future development of the armed struggle in Macedonia were undertaken: the formation of the Communist Party of Macedonia, the expansion of National Liberation Front activity and the formation of new partisan detachments.

Co-operation with the Greek, Albanian and Bulgarian resistance movements was also reinforced.

#### *Formation of the Macedonian Communist Party*

In 1941 and 1942 the Party and the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia had suffered considerable losses but, nevertheless, had managed to preserve continuity in their work to replenish their ranks with new members and to establish branches where these had not previously existed.

In March 1943 the first Central Committee of the Communist Party of Macedonia was formed, consisting of Lazar Koliševski (then a prisoner in Bulgaria), Kuzman Yosifovski, Tsvetko Uzunovski, Strahil Gigov, Mara Natseva and Bané Andreev. Its first session was held in Tetovo on 19th March 1943. This marked the independent existence of the Communist Party of Macedonia which was of particular importance for the future development of the Macedonian national liberation movement. It also testified to the Yugoslav Communist Party's highly principled policy on the national question and it was a fresh step towards the resolution of the Macedonian Question within the War of National Liberation and contributed greatly to the expansion of the liberation struggle.

#### *Expansion of Partisan Detachment Activity*

In the spring of 1943 the Supreme Headquarters of the War of National Liberation and the Macedonian Partisan Detachments divided the territory of Macedonia into five operational zones and prepared their plans for partisan activity.

Military and political activity in the first half of 1943 was characterised by the formation of new partisan detachments and the considerable enlargement of those already in existence. In this period the Kichevo and Mavrovo Detachment and the Second Kichevo and Mavrovo Albanian Detachment were active as well as the Damyan Gruev Detachment, the Gotsé Delchev Detachment, the Dohri Daskalov Detachment, the Sava Mihailov Detachment, the Bregalnitsa, Kumanovo, Skopje and Shar Mountains detachments and a group in Azot which was the remnant of the Dimitar Vlahov Detachment.

These partisan detachments were involved in a considerable amount of activity, such as the engagements at Slivovo (23rd May), at Karbunitsa (20th June), at Krushevo (2nd August), at Gornikovo (19th May), at Dradnya (3rd June) at Prohor Pchinski (9th July), at Nerav (15th July) and at St. Iliya (2nd August).

The successes of 1942 and partisan activities in 1943 made it possible to set up certain liberated and semi-liberated territories.

The armed struggle covered the larger part of Macedonia and contained several focal points, such as the Mavrovo-Kichevo-Debarsa area, the Bitola-Prespa area and the mountain regions of Kozhuf and Kozyak.

At the beginning of 1943 the occupiers made increasingly stringent and unceasing efforts to hinder the growth of the War of National Liberation. In the spring and summer of 1943 in the Mavrovo and Kichevo region, on Kozhuf and on Kozyak the oc-



cupiers' military actions ended in failure. The Bulgarian occupiers vastly increased the numbers of their police force throughout Macedonia. They also formed counter-units of armed counter-revolutionary formations and organised a separate intelligence service from their administrative and educational personnel. The organisation of armed Ballist formations, under the command of Dzhe-mail Hasani Dzheho and Mefail Shehu Zayazi, began in the Italian-occupied territory of western Macedonia. That summer the Bulgarians introduced a further division, the Seventeenth, which was stationed in eastern Macedonia.

### *Formation of the Macedonian Liberation Army*

The meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Macedonia held in the vicinity of the village of Oteshevo at Prespa on 2nd August 1943 took note of the major events of the war. The fall of the fascist government in Italy on 25th July 1943 was interpreted as heralding Italy's capitulation. Therefore, in order to make the best use of Italy's capitulation, a resolution was passed at the Prespa meeting that the main armed forces should be concentrated in the territory under Italian occupation: Gostivar, Kichevo, Debar, Debartsa and Struga.

The Prespa meeting also reached the conclusion that the conditions now favoured the assumption of a new rôle by the military organisation: military units capable of taking action throughout Macedonia and in other parts of Yugoslavia as well should be formed.

The meeting likewise decided that a start should be made on the establishment of the higher organs of a people's government and on preparations for the formation of the Anti-fascist Assembly of the National Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM).

In western Macedonia the districts of Mavrovo, Kichevo and Debartsa were liberated. Communications between the towns of Gostivar and Debar and between Kichevo and Struga were rendered highly problematic. New partisan units were formed. On 18th August 1943, on Mt. Slavey, the Headquarters of the First and Second Operational Zones formed the First Mirché Atsev Battalion, the Macedonian people's first regular military unit, from the Damyan Gruev Detachment together with newly-joined fighters. Thus began the formation of the Macedonian People's Army as an integral part of the Yugoslav Army of National Liberation. This event was of particular importance to the Macedonian people and to the nationalities living in Macedonia. The establishment of the army signified a new quality in military organisation; it was a pre-condition

for the future successful conduct of the armed conflict and it was a guarantee that the gains made in the course of the uprising and revolution were to be safeguarded.

### *Capitulation of Italy*

Italy's withdrawal from the war was reflected in the development of the War of National Liberation in the territory under Italian occupation. The Germans set up their own authorities in Tetovo and in Struga.

Units from the First and Second Operational Zones disarmed the Italian Firenze Division. The liberated territories were enlarged and united to include the towns of Kichevo and Debar and the area from Bukovich and Vlaynitsa, south of Gostivar, to the gorge near the village of Botun, north of Ohrid and Struga.

Italy's capitulation, on 9th September 1943, accelerated the formation of new military units so that in September and October 1943 nine battalions, six partisan detachments and several diversionary groups were active in Macedonia.

The Italian occupation also brought about changes in the quisling team in Albania. The pro-Italian quisling government was replaced by a pro-German government. The Albanian emblem was changed and also the country's title, from the Kingdom of Albania to the State of Albania. The fall of the government was announced and at first a Temporary Committee was appointed in its place. On 23rd September 1943 a four-man Council of Regency was chosen. Later, the Regency Council appointed Redzhep Mitrovitsa as Premier.

The growth of the liberation movement in 1943 caused considerable upheavals among the Albanian masses. After Italy's capitulation certain of the Standard-bearer discussed with the Headquarters of the National Liberation Army the prospect of their incorporation into the Partisan Detachments. Others, however, remained undecided – in order to gain time in which to see how the situation would develop and to act accordingly.

Through their own agents, and supported by various conservative elements and reactionary forces in the west, the German exerted various forms of political pressure and, to remove them from the influence of the liberation movement and to mobilise and organise them in the war against the national liberation movement, they bribed the Standard-bearers. Some of the Standard-bearers continued to work with the national liberation movement, others remained neutral while some of them supported the Ballist forces – even, in some cases, joining their ranks. This caused the Germans to devote special attention to the Ballist formations led by Dzhe-

mail Hasani and Mefail Shehu Zayazi, supplying them with arms and military instructors.

The changes in Albania subsequent to the Italian capitulation were exploited by Bulgaria who moved in and occupied more than twenty villages in the Prespa district.

After Italy's capitulation the quisling administration and police system in western Macedonia collapsed, officials deserted their posts and prisoners escaped.

The German Supreme Command for western Macedonia created several military commands, organised special intelligence centers and brought in some units of the twenty-one mountaineer corps from Albania.

### *The Liberated Territory and Its Defence*

The existence of liberated territory was of considerable significance to the development of the armed struggle in Macedonia. The territory was, in this respect, a political and military base for the strengthening and expansion of the liberation war in Macedonia. Its importance lay in the fact that the Macedonian people, forty years after the Krushevo republic, once more had a part of their country which was free and in which a new, people's authority had been established. And concurrently other forms were developing which contained within them elements of a liberated state.

Political activity found its special expression in a large number of political meetings in the liberated towns and villages. Amongst these the meeting in Kichevo on 26th September 1943, which was attended by a large section of the population of the Kichevo district and by representatives from various places in the liberated territory, was outstanding.

Active together with the Central Committee of the Macedonian Communist Party, the Regional Committee of the League of Communist Youth of Yugoslavia and the Supreme Headquarters, with its seat at the village of Tervena Voda, were two District Committees of the Macedonian Communist Party and the League of Communist Youth and four Area Committees. In the towns and villages the occupation authorities had been overthrown and new democratic people's authorities formed with district, area and village National Liberation Committees. A military back-up organisation was organised at the same time. It had three commands, one in Debar, one in Kichevo and one in the village of Izdeglavje in Debartsa, and branches in the railway stations and a large number of stores and workshops.

The first schools in the Macedonian language came into operation in the liberated territories in October 1943.

A council of religious deputies was established in Debartsa. Its task was to organise the clergy for the free profession of their faith. The congregation of clergy held in Debartsa was, in fact, the first step towards the creation of an autocephalous Macedonian Orthodox Church.

A strong war dynamic characterised the period from the establishment of the free territory to the early days of December 1943. This made the formation of new units possible and then their re-formation into larger ones. In October and November 1943 there were two groups each one consisting of two battalions and a company of heavy artillery each under the direct command of the Supreme Headquarters. There were also the Debar Youth Battalion, the Kichevo Albanian Battalion and a battery of 47 mm. guns. The other units came under the command of the operational zones.

Actions in defence of the liberated territory began from the first day of its establishment. Thus, on 12th September 1943, there were engagements with the Bulgarian army near the village of Bigor Dolentsi and then, on 22nd and 25th September, with German troops at Botun Gorge; and so it continued until December when the operational units left the liberated territory.

After the engagements in the Kichevo region, the First Macedonian-Kosovo Brigade, consisting of four battalions and a company of heavy artillery with a fighting force of about eight hundred well-armed and equipped soldiers, was formed on 11th November 1943. The Headquarters of the Brigade consisted of Commandant Petar Brayovich Gyuro, Deputy-Commandant Chedo Filipovski-Damë, Political Commissar Mita Milykovich and Deputy commissar Vera Atseva.

Immediately upon its formation the Brigade went into action against the Germans in the Izvor, Podvis and Klenoets regions. On 21st November it was on the march towards Krushevo and Brod and involved in engagements on Mt. Kozyak.

### *Engagements in the Region of the Kozyak Massif*

As soon as it was formed, the Kumanovo Partisan Detachment was involved in engagements in the region to the north of Kumanovo, either on its own or in conjunction with the South Morava Detachment. Among the numerous conflicts with the Bulgarian occupiers and Drazha Mihailovich's bands there were the engagements at Rankovtse on 3rd October, at Stratsin on 5th Octo-

ber, at Dragomantse on 7th October, at Shopsko Rudare on 2th October, at Dumanovtse on 9h October, at Mlado Nagorichane on 28th October and at Drenak on 10th December. In the course of these various actions the Kumanovo Partisan Detachment was transformed into the Yordan Nikolov Detachment.

The Bulgarian and the German occupiers perceived the strategic importance of the Kumanovo – Vranje – Tsrna Trava region to the development of the armed conflict in Southern Serbia, Kosovo and Metohiya and Macedonia and also in Bulgaria. They, therefore, maintained strong garrison troops, police and military police in order to safeguard communications between Skopje and Nish and between Skopje and Sofia.

Drazha Mihailovich's men were entrenched in the region of Mts. Ruen and Kozyak and to the north of them. Through terrorisation of the population and with help from the occupiers and their supporters in the west they managed to strengthen their position and form what was known as the Vardar Chetniks Corps, consisting of four brigades.

The engagements in 1943 on the Kozyak Massif and actions along the line of communications rendered traffic between Nish and Skopje extremely difficult. For this reason an offensive against both the partisan detachments and the local population in the area from Piro to Vranje and Kumanovo was mounted in addition to the usual reprisals on the local population. This action involved three Bulgarian divisions and was reinforced by police.

In the course of the offensive the Bulgarian occupiers succeeded in rounding up virtually the entire population, interning about thirty thousand peasant and commandeering or destroying large quantities of foodstuffs and other goods.

#### *Growth of the National Liberation War in Pirin Macedonia*

Following upon the political successes of 1941 and 1942, the year 1943 was a crucial one in the growth of the national liberation movement and the intensification of the armed struggle in Pirin Macedonia too.

The victories of the Red Army and, in Yugoslavia, the national liberation movement's considerable successes gave a strong impetus to the growth of partisan groups and detachments and to the increase in actions in Pirin Macedonia. In 1943 partisan groups and detachments were frequently involved in offensive actions.

On 1st May 1943 the partisan groups and companies of the Razlog region were formed into the Yané Sandanski Detachment,

with Krum Radinov as its commandant and Gyorgyi Y. Madolev as its political commissar.

In the spring and summer of 1943 the armed struggle was also increasing in the Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad) district, where a partisan detachment named after the fallen leader Nikola Kallapchiev had been formed. One of this detachment's largest-scale actions was the liberation of a group of political prisoners who had been sentenced to forced labour in the Pirin Mine. The prisoners joined up with the detachment. Later, on 7th November 1943, they liberated other prisoners from the camp near the village of Hrsovo.

It was at this time that a partisan detachment named after the Macedonian writer Anton Popov, who had been killed in Sofia in 1942, was formed in the Petrich district. Also at this time the activity of the partisan groups in the Sveti Vrach and Melnik districts was intensified.

Towards the end of 1942 the formation of committees of the Fatherland Front began to be set up in the towns and villages of Pirin Macedonia. This activity extended into 1943 but proceeded relatively slowly as the realisation of the Fatherland Front committees according to the Bulgarian model was fraught with difficulties.

At the close of 1943 the national liberation movement in Pirin Macedonia suffered a heavy blow with the death of its distinguished leader Nikola Parapunov.

#### *Outbreak of the National Liberation War in Aegean Macedonia*

By 1943 the Greek Communist Party, the E.A.M. and the E.L.A.S. organisations covered the whole of Greece. From the autumn of 1943 the partisan detachments were reorganised as military formations: battalions, regiments and divisions. The Macedonian population of Aegean Macedonia joined the liberation movement of the Greek people in large numbers and succeeded in forming their own partisan units.

In 1943 partisan units carried out several daring exploits in the regions of Mt. Payak (Arachne), Krusha, Kaymakchalan, Vicho and Bigla. On 8th February they destroyed an Italian company at Vonon on the River Venetiko, and on 4th March a column of Italian lorries at the bridges at Vatsini and Bigla; an Italian battalion was routed near Bugazi-Faradikambi and the town of Grebena was liberated on 24th March 1943.

The expansion of the branches of both the Greek Communist Party and the E.A.M., the successes of the E.L.A.S. units, the victories of the Red Army and the successes of the Yugoslav liberation movement all had a marked effect on the population of Aegean

Macedonia. The effect on the Macedonian population of the Kostur (Castoria) district was such that they initiated a large-scale uprising. Partisan units were formed in many Macedonian villages in the district. They exerted considerable pressure upon the leaders of both the Greek Communist Party and E.A.M. to incorporate them into the E.L.A.S. units.

The above successes were echoed in the districts of Voden (Edessa) and Lerin (Florina). There, near the village of Lageni, the Lerin Partisan Detachment, composed of both Macedonians and Greeks, was formed on 28th March 1943.

In the course of the winter of 1942-43 the Yané Sandanski and Damé Gruev detachments crossed from the Bitola and Prespa districts into Aegean Macedonia. The political activities carried out by these two detachments among the Macedonian population there were of the highest importance. They explained the aims of the struggle in which the Macedonian people were engaged together with their allies, the other Yugoslav peoples. At the same time they revealed how the propaganda of the Bulgarian Club and the Mihailovists was serving the interests of the Bulgarian occupiers.

The Vicho Detachment and the Damé Gruev Detachment from Bitola nad Prespa developed and intensified their political agitation and succeeded in persuading the Macedonian population in the districts of Kostur (Castoria) and Lerin (Florina) to hand over to the partisans the weapons they had received from the occupiers and to join actively in the liberation movement together with the Greek and other peoples living in Aegean Macedonia.

Even in the third year of the uprising the Greek Communist Party and the E.A.M. had still not clarified their views on a large number of questions relating to the political and strategic conceptions of the uprising – such, for example, as the question of the allies and the national question. It was in consequence of this that the E.A.M. and E.L.A.S. signed an agreement with a representative of the British Middle East Headquarters on 5th July 1943. This agreement meant that E.L.A.S. came under the command of the British Middle East Headquarters and thus lost its freedom and independence of action; and that the Greek anti-fascist liberation movement became dependent upon the interests of the western allies. In accordance with this agreement the Greek government in exile and the British Middle East Headquarters took steps to safeguard their interests by creating the E.J.A. – E.D.E.S. armed formations as a counterbalance to E.L.A.S. and by establishing contact with the quisling military formations. Such organisations made their appearance in Aegean Macedonia under the titles of the I.B.E. (Defenders of Northern Greece) and the P.A.O. (Pan-Hellenic Freedom Organisation).

The collaboration of the government in exile's military formations with the occupiers and the quislings did great damage to the Greek people's liberation movement and so to the Macedonians as well. Despite the difficulties that it encountered the anti-fascist movement in Greece still managed to grow in strength. There was a considerable influx of fresh fighters in Aegean Macedonia and E.L.A.S. formed the Ninth Division in the western district of Aegean Macedonia and the Tenth Division in the central district.

After the capitulation of Italy the German occupation command undertook actions in Greece in October 1943, beginning in the Peloponnese and concluding in Aegean Macedonia. The aim was to take those districts which had been held by the Italians and at the same time to strengthen the rule of the quisling government.

Operations against the E.L.A.S. Ninth Division began in Aegean Macedonia on 12th October 1943 and the battles continued until 31st October.

One particular success for the national liberation movement was the formation of a Slav-Macedonian People's Liberation Front (S.N.O.F) for the districts of Lerin (Florina) and Kostur (Castoria) and a special group of Macedonian activists in the Voden (Edessa) district.

The formation of the Slav-Macedonian People's Liberation Front was the first step towards raising the Macedonian question in Greek territory during the war or the uprising. It only confirmed the political and military successes which had been achieved and it was expected, with justification, that it would be positively reflected in the mobilisation against fascism of the Macedonian people. At the same time it also strengthened the unity of the Macedonian and the Greek peoples in their struggles against both the fascist occupiers and local traitors.

The Liberation Front and the group of Macedonian Party activists in Voden (Edessa) undertook the mobilisation of the population and the organisation of the fight against the occupiers but also played a broader rôle among the Macedonian people. They acted as organisers of provisioning and of cultural and educational activity to which end they published a large number of newspapers and bulletins. The Front's political organisation gradually developed into an organisation of popular rule.

However, despite the considerable rôle played by the Front's organisers in the incorporation of the Macedonian people into the anti-fascist war, instead of extending it into other areas the Greek Communist Party cut short the Front's work even in the districts mentioned.

### *Manifesto of the Supreme Headquarters*

As a consequence of the authority with which it was invested the Supreme Headquarters, a military body, was compelled to fulfil the functions of both a political and a representative body. This was shown in its strengthening of popular rule; in the preparations for the convening of the Anti-fascist Assembly; in the formation of the Committee of Initiative of the Anti-fascist Assembly of the People's Liberation of Macedonia (A.S.N.O.M.); in the contacts established with the liberation movements in the neighbouring countries; in the reception of Allied missions and, especially, in the publication of its Manifesto.

The Manifesto of the Supreme Headquarters dealt with the issues relating to the liberation struggle of the Macedonian people. It stated the programmatic aims upon which the position of the Macedonian people in the community of the Yugoslav peoples would be based. It emphasized that a war for national liberation was being fought under the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and in partnership with the other Yugoslav peoples. Further, it stated that the anti-Hitler coalition and the resistance movements in the neighbouring countries could be seen as allies of the Macedonian people and were a guarantee of the war's success. The Manifesto stressed the need for the unity of the Macedonian people and the nationalities in Macedonia (Albanians, Turks, etc.) in developing brotherhood and unity in their life together.

The Supreme Headquarters' Manifesto stated that the Macedonian people and nationalities would have full equality in the future community of the Yugoslav peoples and would be assured of free development based on the principle of every nation's right to self-determination. It further underlined the need for the establishment of amicable relations with all the other countries of the Balkans and stated the need for the creation of a Balkan federation of free peoples.

The Manifesto set forth the prospects for the liberation of the Macedonian people of Pirin and Aegean Macedonia and called upon them to take an active part in the liberation wars of the Bulgarian and Greek peoples as a route to their own national liberation.

The programmatic aims of the Manifesto were a reflection of the desires and aspirations of the Macedonian people. The Manifesto was, therefore, universally acclaimed and accepted and this resulted in a powerful wave of new fighters in the units and in the strengthening of the various forms of resistance against the occupiers.

### *Second Session of the Anti-fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (A.V.N.O.J.)*

In the second half of 1943 the Yugoslav liberation movement achieved significant results. The entire country was involved in armed struggle. In November 1943 the composition of the Yugoslav National Liberation Army included eight corps of twenty-six divisions; ten independent brigades; a hundred and eight partisan detachments and other units, commands and headquarters. A large part of the territory of Yugoslavia had been liberated and organs of popular rule were already developed even in the territories as yet unliberated.

In these circumstances, with the War of National Liberation now widespread, the Second Session of the Anti-fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (A.V.N.O.J.) was held in Yaitse on 29th November 1943. It was attended by two hundred and eight delegates from virtually all parts of the country. The delegates from Macedonia were not, however, in a position to attend the Session.

The Second Session of A.V.N.O.J. justly gave its approval to the gains achieved by the three-year-old struggle of the Yugoslav peoples for national liberation, for equality of relations and for a new state system in Yugoslavia.

The Assembly was constituted the supreme legislative and executive body and as representing the sovereign will of the peoples of Yugoslavia.

It was further concluded that Yugoslavia should be established on a democratic federative principle as a community of equal peoples.

The resolutions to withdraw from the Yugoslav government in exile all rights to legal government of Yugoslavia and to forbid the king to return to Yugoslavia were of particular importance.

At the Second Session of A.V.N.O.J. the Macedonian people, for the first time in their history, were recognised as a separate people and Macedonia became one of the federative units of democratic federative Yugoslavia. The Macedonian people welcomed these decisions as a turning-point in the history of the affirmation of Macedonian nationality. The decisions provided a fresh stimulus to the National liberation War in Macedonia.

*Concentration and Reorganisation  
of National Liberation Army and Macedonian  
Partisan Detachments in 1943*

Communication routes through Macedonia were of particular importance to the Germans, especially in their defence of the Aegean Coast of Greece from possible invasion by the Allies or from penetration by the Red Army by way of Romania and Bulgaria. The lines of communication running through western Macedonia provided a supplementary link for the German units stationed on the coast of the Aegean Sea. In November and in the early days of December 1943, as part of the operations they were undertaking in Yugoslavia in the winter of 1943-44, the Germans mounted a concentrated attack on the liberated territory in western Macedonia, using sections of two divisions (the 297th and the 1st Alpine) and also armed Ballist formations.

The Supreme Headquarters and the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Macedonia cut short their operations in western Macedonia and despatched their units in the direction of Kozhuf, in Aegean Macedonia, with the intention of extending their actions from western into central and eastern Macedonia. On 5th December 1943 this decision came into operation and by 8th December the village of Fushtani in the Meglen district had been reached. Certain military and territorial units and partisan detachments remained in western Macedonia. On 20th December 1943 the Second Macedonian Shock Brigade was formed from the three battalions of the III operational zone. By 23rd December the reorganisation of the detachments was complete. In addition to the First and Second Brigades a group consisting of two battalions (the Stiv Naumov and Hristo Botev) had been formed.

*Fushtani Council and National  
Liberation Youth League  
of Macedonia Congress*

On 21st December 1943 the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Macedonia set up in the village of Fushtani a council of party members from the detachments and from the field. About a hundred and eighty party members attended the session of the council. Three reports were presented: by the Central Committee members Tsvetko Uzunovski and Strahil Gigov, and by the Commandant of the Supreme Headquarters of the National Liberation Army and Macedonian Partisan Detachments Mihaylo Apostolski.

On 22nd December the First Congress of the Anti-fascist Youth League of Macedonia was held in Fushtani attended by two hundred and eighty delegates from the military units and from the field. The Congress demonstrated the marked unity of the young people in the war against the occupiers and against local traitors. Equally marked was their determination to prolong the war until Yugoslavia was finally liberated. At the Congress the National Liberation Youth League of Macedonia (N.O.M.S.M.) was formed as an integral part of the United League of Anti-fascist Youth of Yugoslavia (U.S.A.O.J.). In addition a Supreme Committee was elected and the tasks of the organisation were defined.

*Operations in the Meglen and Tikvesh  
Districts*

The region of Kozhuf, Meglen and Mt. Payak (Arachne) provided First and Second Brigades and the group of battalions with a base for their attack upon Bulgarian and German garrisons in the frontier zone that extends through the districts of Tikvesh and Gevgeliya and along the valley of the River Vardar. The aim of the military actions was, in addition to striking a blow against the occupation garrisons, to unify and extend the liberated territory which was divided by several Bulgarian frontier garrisons. With this aim the three groups (the First and Second Brigades and the group of battalions) were despatched from Meglen across the Greek-Yugoslav border to the districts of Tikvesh, Gevgeliya and Mariovo. They were acting on a front more than sixty kilometres wide and about forty kilometres deep. Fierce fighting took place from 26th December 1943 to 18th January 1944. The Germans and Bulgarians replied to the offensive actions of the National Liberation Army and the Macedonian Partisan Detachments on the communications along the River Vardar and on the Mariovo Mica Mine by organising an offensive of their own which lasted from 5th to 18th January 1944. The fighting was extremely fierce and culminated in the battles of 18th January 1944 in the Tushin - Noti - Lankadiya (Mt. Payak - Arachne) region.

The German and Bulgarian offensive in Aegean Macedonia was a continuation of the German offensive operations in western Macedonia of autumn 1943. Its aim was to gain control of communications to the rear of the German E Army Group and thus safeguard their freedom of action in the event of an invasion by the Allied forces. Because such were its aims the offensive was extended to the area east of the River Vardar and it developed with especial ferocity in the Kukush (Kilkis) region and in the neighbourhood of Lake Doyran.



## GENERAL UPRISING

### *Overall Situation at the End of 1943 and Beginning of 1944*

In 1943 Germany's position was grave and offered no prospects. On the Eastern Front the Red Army was continuously advancing westwards. The Western Allies were establishing a front in Italy.

In Yugoslavia, after the capitulation of Italy, the armed struggle increased in strength and National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan units were growing both in numbers and in organisation. The German Supreme Command therefore devoted special attention to the Balkans and in 1943 the Yugoslav Front assumed a greater importance in their plans.

On the capitulation of Italy, the German Supreme Command swiftly took possession of a large part of the territory which the Italian units had held in Yugoslavia, Albania and Greece.

Yugoslavia's strategic significance to the Allied Front in Italy invested the Adriatic Coast with a particular importance.

The German Supreme Command, aiming at the destruction of the main forces of the Yugoslav National Liberation Army and, subsequently, the Greek and Albanian liberation formations, began offensive operations against the National Liberation Army forces in the central area of Yugoslavia between the Adriatic Coast and the rivers Kupa, Sava, Drina and Lim. The operations were extended throughout Yugoslavia and into Albania and Greece and lasted from mid-September 1943 to January 1944.

The Supreme Headquarters of the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments recognized the importance of Serbia, the central area of the Balkans, and transferred its main military operations to the eastern regions of Yugoslavia in the summer of 1944.

The purpose of the German offensive was to strengthen the defence of the Balkans and to facilitate the withdrawal of the German E Army Group from Greece and Albania.

By 1943 the Macedonian people had become convinced that they would succeed in obtaining their national and social freedom under the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and in conjunction with the other Yugoslav peoples. The year 1942 had been characterised by the political winning over of the mass of the people. In 1943 conditions favourable to a large-scale development of the armed struggle were created. In 1944 military gains which were accompanied by fresh political successes were the dominant feature. The main armed conflicts of 1943 took place in

western Macedonia, at Prespa, in the Gevgeliya and Kumanovo districts and in the western regions of Aegean Macedonia. This forced the spread of armed action on into central and eastern Macedonia where the fighting spirit of the mass of the people was on an equally high level. For their part the occupiers were particularly anxious to halt the growth of armed action in eastern Macedonia as they feared that such action would link up with the movement in Pirin Macedonia where, in view of the peculiar status of the Macedonians under the Greater Bulgarian regime, conditions favourable to an even more powerful development of the armed struggle existed. The Bulgarian occupiers, therefore, reinforced their police, military police and other military units in eastern Macedonia.

Powerful armed actions also took place in the region of the Kozyak massif (Kumanovo – Kriva Palanka – Tsrna Trava – Luzhnitsa – Vranje) led by south Morava, Kosovo and Macedonian detachments. The actions of these units were not, however, sufficiently united.

From this territory Serbian, Kosovo and Macedonian detachments threatened the Nish – Skopje railway line, a communications artery linking the German troops in Greece with central Europe. Even the briefest rupture of this artery was a considerable obstacle to the provision of regular supplies to the German forces in Greece.

The territory of the Kozyak massif was at that time a central zone through which the armed actions in Serbia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Bulgaria could be linked.

### *The February Campaign*

The battles fought in the districts of Mavrovo, Tikvesh, Gevgeliya and Meglen in December 1943 and January 1944 created objective conditions which allowed the operations in the Kozhuf region to be carried over into central and eastern Macedonia.

In their plan for the February Campaign the Central Committee of the Macedonian Communist Party and the Supreme Headquarters of the National Liberation Army and Macedonian Partisan Detachments proposed that entries should be made into central and eastern Macedonia with one brigade apiece while another brigade should take action in the region of the Vardar Valley from Veles to Gevgeliya.

The First Brigade set out from Bahovo, according to plan, on 31st January 1944. Because of swift intervention by the Bulgarian occupation forces (about two divisions) and difficult weather conditions (severe cold and heavy snow) the brigade was forced to act under extremely difficult circumstances in its penetration through

Mariovo, Dren and Mukos towards Azot and Poreche. The First Macedonian-Kosovo Shock Brigade was engaged in continuous fighting for fourteen days. Of the actions from this period those at Bogomila Tunnel (7th and 8th February) and at Radobil and Tsrna Reka (12th February) were particularly outstanding.

In the campaign, which lasted from 31st January to 14th February 1944 and covered the ground from Karadzhova to Azot and back, the First Macedonian-Kosovo Shock Brigade held off attacks by the Bulgarian Fourteenth and Fifteenth Division while following a route that measured about three hundred kilometres over snow-covered mountains. The Brigade did not remain in Azot. Its success lay in the fact that it waged a full-scale war and engaged two enemy divisions in central Macedonia for a period of two weeks. The local population joined in these engagements assisting the brigade, gathering food supplies, collecting and treating the wounded, carrying out reconnaissance and acting as couriers.

In its earliest engagements the Second Macedonian Brigade was divided into two sections. One of the sections circulated through the area of Kozhuf – Demir Kapiya – Tsrna Reka, where it engaged with the Bulgarian army of occupation and police force, destroyed the Bulgarian area authorities and halted the work of the Bulgarian schools. The larger part of the brigade set out on 31st January from the village of Zborsko across Kozhuf towards Mrezhichko and, after the attack on Mrezhichko, returned to Zborsko and thereafter carried out diversionary activities on the Demir Kapiya – Gevgeliya railway line.

The Third Group of Battalions set out together with the Supreme Headquarters and the Central Committee of the Macedonian Communist Party on 31st January from the village of Zborsko for the Vardar crossings in the Thessaloniki Plain and thence towards Belasitsa. Thanks to the organisation of the liberation movement in Aegean Macedonia they reached the southern slopes of Belasitsa in eight days and without involvement in any action.

Natural disasters of deep snow, gale-force winds, blizzards, torrents and rivers in spate created very severe problems for the Third Group of Battalions once it arrived in eastern Macedonia. At one point it was also engaged in fighting against Bulgarian troops, at the River Bregalnitsa on 16th and 17th February 1944.

The Third Group's penetration into eastern Macedonia involved an extremely arduous march over mountains and the snow-laden passes on Belasitsa, Plyachkovitsa, Osogovo and Kozyak. In the course of this march it covered some four hundred kilometres in twenty-three days. On its arrival at Kozyak it encountered armed bands of the Vardar Chetnik Corps on Mt. Peren. After having defeated them it joined up with the units which were

then active in the region of the Kozyak massif. This brought the February campaign to a close.

The campaign was important in both military and political terms. In the course of the campaign the various units engaged the entire Bulgarian Fifth Army as well as Bulgarian detachments from the Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad) and Küstendil garrisons and almost the whole of the occupation's police and military police forces. After this campaign the initiative passed completely into the hands of the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments and the occupiers found themselves compelled to defend their more important positions and their communications.

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Once the February campaign was over the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Macedonia, the Supreme Headquarters and the Delegation from the Supreme Headquarters of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia undertook several political and military measures to strengthen the uprising in the Kumanovo – Kriva Palanka and Bosilgrad – Skopje Tsrna Gora – Luzhnitsa – Vranje regions where three south Moravan battalions, sections of the Second South Moravan Detachment, the Fifth South Moravan Brigade and the military and territorial commands (districts and command locations with their own companies, platoons and guard) were active. Thus the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters, augmented by certain leaders from southern Serbia, assumed the function of Operational Headquarters for the South Moravan, Kosovo and Macedonian units with the special tasks of routing Drazha Mialovich's chetniks strengthening the links with the Serbian units in Yahlanitsa and assisting the Bulgarian resistance movement. To this end, as a first measure, the Hristo Botev Battalion was handed over to the Bulgarian Supreme Headquarters which was then situated in the Tsrna Trava region.

The activity of a large number of units in this territory meant that steps had to be taken to organise them into larger formations.

Thus, on 26th February 1944, the Third Macedonian Shock Brigade was formed from the Macedonian battalions in the village of Zheglyane; on 8th March the Sixth South Moravan Brigade was formed from the South Moravan battalions; and a month later, in the early days of April 1944, the Seventh South Moravan Brigade was formed from newly joined-up fighters. On 25th March the Kosovo Detachment was formed from the Kosovo Battalion on the Kozyak massif and from the battalion newly arrived from Yablanitsa.

In March 1944 the First Sofia Brigade was formed from the Hristo Botev Battalion and the Trn Partisan Detachment.

#### *Activity in Southern Serbia and Northern Macedonia*

The armed bands of the Vardar Chetnik Corps supported the Bulgarians and Germans in their actions against the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments. In February 1944 the Corps consisted of six brigades, each of about eighty men, which were brought up to about two hundred men apiece by means of enforced mobilisation. The Chetnik brigades were concentrated on Mts. German, Ruen and Shiroka.

The Chetnik Corps was an obstacle to the growth of the national liberation movement in this area. One of the first actions, therefore, was the destruction of the Corps. An engagement took place on 29th February in the Seyats region, where the Corps had been stationed since the engagements of 24th February on Mt. Peren. The fighting lasted for a full day and the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments succeeded in routing the Chetniks and engaged in their pursuit. At Novo Selo on 3rd March the last remaining sections of the Vardar Chetnik Corps were broken up.

The decimation of the Vardar Chetnik Corps signified an end to the idea of linking the counter-revolutionary forces in Yugoslavia with those in Greece. For the Bulgarians it meant the loss of an ally. It was also a proof that the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments were firmly established on the Kozyak massif. Units of the First and Fifth Bulgarian armies which had been despatched to the liberated territories were forced to return to their quarters after several engagements near the village of Bilyacha (16th and 17th March) and on Mt. Chemernik (18th March).

The purging of Drazha Mihailovich's Chetniks from the Kozyak massif and the pressure that was exerted on the Bulgarian units created conditions which made it possible to attack key objects in the possession of the occupiers.

Thus, on 26th and 27th March 1944, the Third Macedonian Shock Brigade and the Kosovo Detachment attacked the railways station at Ristovats and certain other targets in the region. On 3rd April they attacked the Zletovo mines, at Dobrovo and Probishtip. On 12th April the Sixth South Moravan Brigade attacked and liberated Kriva Feya.

#### *The Spring Offensive in Macedonia and South-eastern Serbia*

The battles at the end of April and in the course of May 1944 were followed by a fresh enemy offensive, known as the Seventh, in Yugoslavia.

In the Spring of 1944 the Germans had deployed their E Army Group of about four hundred thousand troops under the command of Marshal Löhr to defend the islands and the coastlines of Greece and Albania. Stationed throughout Yugoslavia, German and Bulgarian divisions were guarding the roads which formed this army's communications links with Germany. The existence and growth of the National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan Detachments, however, severed those links and thus threatened the very existence of the E Army Group in Greece and Albania. Meanwhile the Red Army's successes in Romania and the expectation that it would win its way through to the Danube region raised the issue of the E Army Group's withdrawal from Greece and Albania.

As part of the Seventh Enemy Offensive the Germans and the Bulgarians took action in the southern regions of Yugoslavia with the aim of ensuring their domination and, specifically of safeguarding communications. At the same time the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters was involved in actions aimed at gaining control of western Macedonia, where the First Macedonian-Kosovo Shock Brigade had been despatched.

The occupiers brought units from Bulgaria, Chetnik detachments from the Vlasotintse – Leskovats region, the Greek 'Paudzhii' and 'Zervasovtsi' reactionary formations and the German garrison from Kukush (Kilkis). These, together with the Bulgarian Army – an overall strength of about five divisions – were invested in the offensive in Macedonia and the Morava region. This lasted from 25th April to 19th June 1944. On Macedonian territory itself Bulgarian, German and Ballist units to a strength of about two divisions were engaged.

In western Macedonia the First Brigade had several large-scale encounters with Bulgarian and German occupation units (at the villages of Zavoy, Velmey and elsewhere) in the course of its penetration towards Debarsa. After this the Germans assembled fresh forces, notably Ballists, and on 8th May 1944 they began an offensive action lasting until 15th June against the First Macedonian-Kosovo Shock Brigade.

In the course of the fighting the Germans and the Ballists were forced to retreat to their quarters. Thus the First Macedonian-Kosovo Shock Brigade once more gained mastery of the Ohrid – Struga – Debar – Kichevo area. During this action the Brigade was divided into two: the First Macedonian Brigade and the

First Kosovo Brigade. At the same time two detachments were formed to take action in the regions of Azot and Poreche.

The German offensive in western Macedonia was linked to the offensives in the south east of Albania.

The Second Macedonian Shock Brigade was active in the Vardar region and in the Prilep and Bitola areas. On 25th and 26th April 1944 the garrison at Gradeshnitsa was attacked. Subsequently several attacks on smaller garrisons and units were carried out – at Konopishte on 4th June; at Demir Kapiya on 9th June; at Strmashevo on 13th June – and diversionary activities in Kavardarsi and Negotino on 22nd June.

The longest battles were those in the Morava region and in eastern Macedonia where the principal German routes, through the Vardar and Morava valleys, and also the main Bulgarian route, from Skopje to Sofia, were threatened. It was here that the main occupation forces were concentrated with the aim of both keeping the communication routes open and also wiping out the leadership of the uprising in Macedonia and southern Serbia and a section of the Bulgarian leadership: the Bulgarian resistance movement's Supreme Headquarters was then stationed with the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters.

In the second half of April 1944 the Bulgarian Fifth Army was concentrated in the regions to the north of Kumanovo, Stratsin, along the valley of the Kriva, Gyueshevo, Bosilgrad, along the valley of the South Morava and in the regions of Buyanovats and Preshevo.

The Macedonian Supreme Headquarters took steps to nullify the enemy offensive at its very outset. To this end the First Sofia Brigade was despatched to attack Gyueshevo, the Sixth South Morava Brigade to attack Kriva Palanka and the Third Macedonian Brigade and the Kosovo Detachment to attack Kratovo. The attack on Kratovo took place on 25th April 1944, while the Sixth South Morava Brigade and the First Sofia Brigade were despatched to the Osogovo Mountains to join the Third Macedonian Brigade.

The Gevgeliya Partisan Detachment had been guarding the progress from Kozhuf to Osogovo of the Bulgarian party and military leader Blagoy Ivanov, who was travelling to Bulgaria from Moscow. It also joined the Third Macedonian Brigade on the Osogovo Mountains.

The taking of Kratovo while the occupiers were still in the preparatory stages of their offensive was a considerable military and political achievement yet it did not halt the offensive which got under way on 30th April. There were two stages. In the first, which lasted until 12th May, the occupiers were on the attack. Subsequently the National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan

Detachments launched a counter-offensive. Fighting day and night they won their way south almost to Kukush (Kilkis) and then back northwards to Tsrna Trava.

The Spring Offensive took in all of Macedonia and southern Serbia. Enemy troops to a total of about sixty thousand were engaged in actions. Of these troops forty thousand were active in eastern Macedonia and over twenty thousand in western Macedonia. In addition to these, other troops and police were engaged against the Second Brigade.

The National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan Detachments brought the action to a victorious close and compelled the occupation forces to withdraw to their main quarters. As a result of the action the liberated territory in western Macedonia and that of Kumanovo – Kriva Palanka – Vranje – Tsrna Trava – Luzhnitsa were re-established, the liberated territory in the Vardar region was extended and a new liberated territory was established in eastern Macedonia.

The Spring Offensive and the two months of fighting that it involved meant that the National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan Detachments in Macedonia and the Morava region suffered extreme physical and mental fatigue and considerable losses in terms of killed and wounded. The occupying forces, however, suffered considerably heavier losses. In western Macedonia alone six hundred and seventy-two enemy soldiers were killed and seventy-six captured. In eastern Macedonia and the Morava region of south-eastern Serbia over a thousand and sixty were killed and four hundred and ninety-eight officers or men captured. A large quantity of military equipment was also taken.

*Attitude of the Leaders of the Greek  
Communist Party, E.A.M.  
and E.L.A.S. towards the Macedonians*

In the Spring of 1944 the E.L.A.S. units intensified their activity in Aegean Macedonia with attacks on the principal communication routes. Such were the attack on a German train on the Athens – Thessaloniki line, 23rd February; the engagement with Bulgarian and German troops at Kukush (Kilkis), 20th and 24th February; the attack on Ber (Veroia), 6th April; on German columns on Karakamen (Vermion), 24th April; at Klisura (Klissoura), 5th April; on the Ber (Veroia) – Thessaloniki road, 11th April and on the road near Kazhani (Kozani), 8th April.

At the same time, between 2nd and 27th April, the Germans and the reactionary Pulos and P.A.O. armed formations were undertaking operations on Mt. Verion which were met with spirited

resistance by both the Sixteenth E.L.A.S. Brigade and the people themselves.

On 10th March 1944 the Greek Communist Party formed a national liberation committee (P.E.E.A.) which was expanded in April and took steps towards the summoning of a people's assembly. This committee proclaimed the democratic rights of the Greek people, but no mention was made of the rights of the Macedonian people.

Bourgeois and nationalist elements were involved in the committee and this strengthened the position of the Greek bourgeoisie and of Great Britain in Greece.

In August a government of national unity was formed in which seven seats were held by the bourgeois parties and five by E.A.M. and the Greek Communist Party. The pacts signed in the Lebanon and at Caserta placed the national liberation movement of the Greek people in the hands of the Greek bourgeoisie and the British Middle East Military Command. This had particularly serious repercussions for the Macedonian people: the S.N.O.F. branches were disbanded and considerable pressure was brought to bear on the Macedonian partisans, one group of whom left the E.L.A.S. units and joined the National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan Detachments.

Because of the burdensome legacy of past history and because of pressure from bourgeois elements the leaders of the Greek liberation movement and of the Greek Communist Party were not able to look realistically at the situation in Greece or to make use of the progressive forces and the revolutionary aspirations of the Macedonian people. Throughout, they maintained a certain reserve towards the Macedonian people, despite the fact that the latter were fighting together with the Greek people against fascist aggression.

#### *Growth and Spread of the Liberation Movement in Pirin Macedonia*

In 1944 the partisan units in Pirin Macedonia developed on a very large scale. They made increasingly frequent attacks on police and military targets and public buildings and they obstructed the work of the commissions for the requisitioning of food and livestock. Action was particularly directed against those who worked with the Bulgarian authorities. In liberated villages meetings were held which underlined the need for the establishment of a new, popular rule.

The intensified development of the national liberation movement in Vardar and Pirin Macedonia had positive reverberations

in the neighbouring south-western districts of Bulgaria. Partisan units from the Pirin region frequently acted in co-ordinated conjunction with units from the Dupnitsa, Küstendil and Sofia regions. The latter units were, in turn, in close contact with the National Liberation War in Yugoslavia. The Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad) and Razlog partisan detachments acted together with the Sofia Brigade under the command of Slavcho Trnski. On the formation of operational zones within Bulgaria, in the summer of 1944, the partisan units in Pirin Macedonia established the Fourth Insurrectionary Operational Zone in accordance with a decision of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists).

In that summer links were also established between partisan and army units in eastern Macedonia and the Kumanovo region and Partisan units in Pirin Macedonia. In the Liberated territory in eastern Macedonia and the Kumanovo region arms and other equipment were being received from the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters.

## LIBERATION OF MACEDONIA

### *Formation of the Anti-fascist Assembly of the National Liberation of Macedonia (A.S.N.O.M.)*

The Second Session of the Anti-fascist Council of the National Liberation of Yugoslavia (A.V.N.O.J.) intensified its activity towards the formation of an Anti-fascist Assembly of the National Liberation of Macedonia (A.S.N.O.M.).

The Macedonian liberation movement's military and political successes enabled the organs of the war to develop into committees for the national liberation of Macedonia, in the form of a National Liberation Front. In the autumn of 1943 notable results were achieved in this connection. Such organs were formed in the larger towns – Skopje, Prilep, Veles, Kumanovo, Kavadarci, etc. – and in a large number of villages. At the same time a National Liberation Action Committee was formed in Skopje which co-ordinated the activities of all the national liberation committees or organs of the National Liberation Front in the occupied territory, establishing them as political organs and cells of popular rule. Some of the committees for popular aid and military commissions al-

so took upon themselves certain of the functions of organs of popular rule so that in 1942 the first organs of popular rule had already developed out of organs of the war or had been specially formed.

The military and political successes of 1943 speeded the development of the organs of popular rule with the result that, in the same year, national liberation committees were to be found throughout the territory of Macedonia. In the liberated territories, moreover, the formation of higher organs of popular rule (area and regional national liberation committees) began, and the initial steps were taken towards the formation of an anti-fascist national liberation assembly. A Committee of Initiative was formed in the autumn of 1943 with this end in view. In March 1944 this committee passed a resolution calling for the election of town, village, area and district national liberation committees and for the election of delegates to the forthcoming First Session of the Anti-fascist Assembly of the National Liberation of Macedonia. The Committee of Initiative pointed out, in a letter of 14th March 1944, that candidates for election to the Assembly should be persons who, regardless of their own religion or politics, had shown their devotion to the national liberation struggle in their deeds and who were in agreement with the political conception of the Supreme Headquarters of the National Liberation Army and Macedonian Partisan Detachments' Manifesto of October 1943.

In the spring and summer of 1944 village, town and district conferences were held in the greater part of Macedonia. Here the leaders of the organs of popular rule, of more than five hundred national liberation committees, and also the delegates to the First Session of A.S.N.O.M. were elected.

On 2nd August 1944 the First Session of A.S.N.O.M., to which a hundred and sixteen delegates had been elected, began at the Monastery of Prohor of Pchinski.

In addition to these delegates there were also present at the First Assembly: Svetozar Vukmanovich-Tempo, as delegate from the Supreme Headquarters and of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia; a delegation from the Serbian Supreme Headquarters; delegates from the National Liberation Front, from the Women's Anti-fascist Organisation and from the N.O.M.S.M. youth organisation.

The Assembly was also attended by the leaders of the British and American Military Mission accredited to the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters, Major Dickenson and Captain Lambie.

The First Session of A.S.N.O.M. marked the constitution of the state of the Macedonian people and of the nationalities of Macedonia. Several resolutions were passed: constituting A.S.N.O.M. as Macedonia's legislative and executive body; recognising and

approving the actions and tasks of the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters and the Committee of Initiative in the period up to the First Session of A.S.N.O.M.; expressing gratitude to the Supreme Headquarters and to the fighters of the National Liberation Army and the Macedonian Partisan Detachments; instituting Macedonian as the official language of the Macedonian state; and declaring the basic rights of the citizens of democratic Macedonia.

The Assembly elected a Praesidium which consisted of: Metodija Andonov-Chento, President; Panko Brashnarov and Mané Chuchkov, Vice-presidents and eighteen members, including the two Secretaries, Lyupcho Arsov and Vlado Polezhina. It also elected the Macedonian representatives to A.V.N.O.J. and to several subsidiary bodies of the Praesidium.

The A.S.N.O.M. Assembly issued a proclamation concerning its work to the Macedonian people in which, among other things, was stated: "Out of the hard battles and the blood shed by the best of Macedonia's sons has come today the First People's Assembly, the symbol of your freedom and the expression of your sovereignty... The age-old ideal of the Macedonian people has been achieved."

The Session of A.S.N.O.M. confirmed those aims that had been achieved and at the same time provided an impetus towards the general mobilisation of the Macedonian people with the ultimate goal of expelling the occupiers.

As the highest achievement of the National Liberation War in Macedonia, the First Session of A.S.N.O.M. marked the coming into existence of what is now the Socialist Republic of Macedonia in a federation with the other Yugoslav peoples.

After the Session the formation of National Liberation Committees intensified so that in October 1944 there were active in Macedonia three regional committees – the Skopje, Bitola, and Shtip; twenty-nine district units; several neighbourhood units and more than a thousand local liberation committees.

On 28th December 1944, in Skopje, within liberated Macedonia, the First Extraordinary Session of A.S.N.O.M. – which became known as the Second Session – began. The presence of numerous delegates and delegations at this session gave it a particular political importance. Among the delegates were Edward Kardely and Svetozar Vukmanovich, representing the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and among the delegations were those from the Anti-fascist Assemblies of Serbia, Bosna and Hertsegovina and Montenegro.

In addition to the delegates from the other Yugoslav peoples there were representatives from the Bulgarian Fatherland Front and a delegate from the Bulgarian National Committee.



Among the resolutions passed at the Session were resolutions for the establishment of a court and for the trial of those who had committed actions contrary to Macedonian national honour and for the establishment of a Macedonian national bank.

### *Formation of Divisions and Corps*

The influx of new fighters which followed the successful conclusion of the Spring Offensive necessitated the formation of new brigades and the undertaking of a large number of political and military measures to render the leadership of the uprising more efficient.

The army was reorganised in accordance with the plan of the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters. Thus Vardar Macedonia was divided into four operational zones. In three of these zones two divisions and one corps apiece were formed and in the fourth a single division.

In addition to the formation of divisions and corps a territorial army service was established. This consisted of eight commands in the districts of Kumanovo, Shtip, Strumitsa, Skopje, Veles, Prilep, Bitola and Kichevo and thirty-four local commands with separate units – battalions, companies and partisan territorial security guards.

The formation of the divisions began in August 1944 and the process was completed in mid-October, by which time three corps of seven divisions had been formed.

### *Offensive against Communications*

In July, August and September 1944 the National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan Detachments in Macedonia and southern Serbia intensified their actions against occupation garrisons, against motor roads and targets on the Nish – Skopje – Thessaloniki railway.

In eastern Macedonia, after the formation of the Fourth Macedonian Brigade, the Bulgarian occupiers engaged their Seventeenth Division in a final attempt to halt the growth of the uprising in this area. However, as a result of their numerous conflicts with the Fourth Brigade the Bulgarian Seventeenth Division was forced back into its larger garrison centres, Bulgarian rule in the Bregalnitsa and Strumitsa valleys collapsed and Berovo was liberated.

In western Macedonia actions were fought against the German forces of occupation and against Ballist formations. In Poreche Drazha Mihailovich's Chetnik formations disintegrated wi-

thout a struggle and joined up with the National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan Detachments on the entry of the units of the Fifth Brigade from the Second Zone.

The Bulgarian government, together with Headquarters of the German E Group, was preparing an offensive in Macedonia and southern Serbia in the summer of 1944 in which the engagement of three German divisions was foreseen in addition to that of the Bulgarian Fifth and First Armies. The offensive was intended to safeguard the Bulgarian government's political combinations in Macedonia. However, the overall situation on the Eastern Front, particularly the successful development of the Red Army's operations in Romania, and the National Liberation Army and Partisan Detachments' successful operations in Yugoslavia prevented the realisation of this Bulgarian-German offensive.

The Supreme Headquarters of the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments together with the Anglo-American Allies, recognising the importance of communication routes through Macedonia and southern Serbia to the withdrawal of the German E Army Group, planned that from 1st to 7th September 1944 the National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan Detachments and the allied air forces should take co-ordinated action on the principal communication routes in Macedonia and southern Serbia. All the units at the disposal of the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters and a section of the Serbian Supreme Headquarters' units were engaged in these actions.

During this period the Red Army's successes, particularly that of its Third Ukrainian Front in Romania, and the Uprising of the Romanian people on 23rd August 1944 were particularly significant in the overall situation in the Balkans. This state of affairs accelerated the capitulation of royalist Bulgaria.

### *Collapse of the Bulgarian Kingdom*

From 1941 to 1944 the main armed occupation force in Macedonia was the Bulgarian Fifth Army whose headquarters were in Skopje. Three of its divisions were located in Macedonia and one in South Serbia. The Bulgarian Fifth Army had on its disposal some other units /two cavalry regiments, frontier detachments, regiments and battalions guarding communications, companies of fighters and machine-gunners/. During the offensives, in addition to these units stationed in Macedonia and in South Serbia, the Bulgarian authorities engaged police, military police and army formations from the garrisons of Sofia, Küstendil and Gorna Dzhumaya (Blagoevgrad) in Bulgaria. Prior to the capitulation of Bulgaria ar-

mies from Rusé and other parts of Bulgaria were brought into Macedonia.

The political unrest in the Bulgarian kingdom reached its culmination in August 1944: governments were continually changing – that of Bozhilov was succeeded in turn by those of Bagryanov and Muraviev.

It was against this background that the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters sent a parliamentary delegation to the Bulgarian Headquarters in Macedonia and southern Serbia. They conveyed proposals to the effect that the Bulgarian units should join the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments in their fight against the Germans or, if this should prove unacceptable, that they should hand over to the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments their arms and military equipment and evacuate Yugoslav territory. These proposals were, however, rejected by the Bulgarian commanders.

On the entry of the Red Army into Bulgaria the Bulgarian government was forced to capitulate. Revolutionary changes took place and the liberation movement assumed authority in Bulgaria on 9th September 1944. The new Fatherland Front government ordered the Bulgarian detachments into battle against the Germans. However, the Bulgarian commanders in Macedonia and southern Serbia did not carry out the Fatherland Front government's orders but continued to fight until they were disarmed by the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments.

A few of the Bulgarian units stationed in Macedonia (the Prilep garrison and some other, smaller groups) did go to war against the German armies.

During the occupation the officers and N.C.O.'s. of the Bulgarian Fifth Army had terrorised the Macedonian and Serbian peoples and their refusal to carry out the orders of the Fatherland Front government was yet another grave crime, even against their own, the Bulgarian people.

On the coming to power of the Fatherland Front in Bulgaria the Pirin Macedonians were profoundly convinced that this would make it possible for them to realise their national rights. The Yané Sandanski Brigade was formed from the partisan detachments with the intention of taking part in the war against the Germans in Macedonia. The new Fatherland Front government, however, disbanded the Yané Sandanski Brigade. This unexpected step on the part of the Bulgarian government was the first harbinger of new difficulties facing the Macedonian people in the course of the realisation of their national rights.

### *Defeat of the Greek Anti-fascist Movement*

In September and October 1944 E.L.A.S. units attacked German garrisons, stores and columns retreating northwards through Aegean Macedonia.

The Greek reactionary circles of Ralis and others were aiding the German troops in their withdrawal and attempting to set up security Battalions in Aegean Macedonia. They were collaborating with the Governor of Thessaloniki and with the Bulgarian occupation authorities. After the capitulation of the Bulgarian government General Sirakov, as Commander of the Bulgarian Second Corps in the eastern part of Aegean Macedonia, came to an agreement with the Greek reactionary Andon Chaush on 18th September 1944 by which he undertook to fight against the E.L.A.S. detachments and to hand over power in Drama and Kavalla to the Greek reactionaries.

During the fighting against the occupiers the leadership of the anti-fascist struggle in Greece, influenced by the government of national unity, began secret activities whose aim was the disarming of and disbanding of the Macedonian battalions. A state of open conflict was soon reached between the E.L.A.S. Twenty-seventh Brigade and the Kostur (Castoria) – Lerin Battalion. The battalion was compelled to cross into Yugoslavia on 13th October 1944, and the Voden (Edessa) Battalion was forced to do likewise on 16th October. From these two battalions the First Aegean Brigade was formed on 7th November 1944.

An agreement was reached between the British armed forces and the Greek government of national unity in Caserta on 26th September 1944. The agreement put the E.L.A.S. units under British command. Following the conflict of 3rd December 1944 in Athens between British and nationalist government units on the one hand and E.L.A.S. units on the other and the Varkisa truce of 11th January 1945, agreement was reached between the nationalist government and the Greek Communist Party and the E.A.M. By means of these various agreements the Greek Communist Party and the E.A.M. in practice surrendered power to the Greek Right and allowed the demobilisation of the E.L.A.S. units. This meant that the long-drawn-out struggle of the Greek people and the nationalities of Greece against the occupation ended in capitulation.

### *Collaboration between the Yugoslav and Bulgarian Liberation Movements*

During the War of National Liberation there was collaboration between the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists). At certain periods there were closely co-ordinated activities which involved both the National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan Detachments and also units of the Bulgarian resistance movement. Until the spring of 1944 Boyan B'lgaryanov represented the Bulgarian resistance movement in the form of the Central Committee of the Bulgarian Workers' Party (Communists) at the Central Committee of the Macedonian Communist Party and the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters. In Serbia and Macedonia, in view of the geographical links between the regions, collaboration in the field was to be seen in the direct aid supplied by the Headquarters of the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments in the formation of the Bulgarian partisan detachments and other military formations and in joint actions. Not only was there close collaboration with the Bulgarian Supreme Headquarters and the Sofia Operational Zone but also the following units were formed in Serbia or Macedonia: The Trn Partisan Detachment, the Hristo Botev Battalion, the First and Second Sofia Brigades, the Georgi Dimitrov Brigade and the Rakovsky Detachment. In nature and in quality this amounted to more than ordinary collaboration.

In the winter and in the spring of 1944 the Supreme Headquarters of the Bulgarian resistance movement was situated on Yugoslav territory, together with the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters. Thus the links and collaboration between the two were extremely close until May 1944.

In the summer of 1944 links were established with a number of Bulgarian partisan detachments (the Bosilgrad, Küstendil, Radomir, and Dupnitsa Detachments). Aid from the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters to the Bulgarian Supreme Headquarters was also organised in intensified actions against the occupation garrisons leading up to 9th September 1944 and in the form of supplies of weapons and equipment from the regions of the border zone to the Bulgarian partisan detachments. The defeat of the Bulgarian Fifth Army of Occupation was a particular form of assistance to the Bulgarian Supreme Headquarters in the period of the destruction of bourgeois rule in Bulgaria. Still armed, the Fifth Army attempted to reach Bulgaria, intending to take action against the Fatherland Front. In such a situation these activities could not have halted the revolutionary movement of the Bulgarian people nor yet have come to the aid of the Coburg monarchy, but they could still increase the number of victims among the Bulgarian people.

After 9th September and the formation of the Fatherland Front government in Bulgaria new possibilities for mutual contact and collaboration were opened up.

### *Actions during the Withdrawal of the German E Army Group*

The German E Army Group, under the command of Marshal Löhr, was stationed in Greece and Albania. Its strength was estimated at about four hundred thousand. After the capitulation of Bulgaria a section of the force fought for about a month to reoccupy Macedonia and thus safeguard the withdrawal of the E Army Group.

In the fighting of September 1944 the German units succeeded in taking key positions and towns in Macedonia and pushed the National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan Detachments out of the towns and away from the principal communication routes, thus safeguarding the withdrawal of the E Army Group from Greece.

During the fighting for the control of key positions in Macedonia the main German units were grouped in the region of Yugoslavia's southern borders. One division was stationed in the Struga region for penetration via Debar and some two divisions were concentrated around Bitola for penetration via Prilep and Gradsko towards Skopje. A group of about a division in strength was stationed at Doyran and began to penetrate, echelon by echelon, via Strumitsa and Shtip. A lengthy period of fighting then began along the communicating valleys against these German divisions and those which came immediately after them.

The actions of September and October were of great significance in the final expulsion of the Germans from Macedonia and in the destruction of the Ballists. It is also significant that seven divisions, armed with equipment captured from Bulgarian and German troops, were formed during the fighting. The numerical strength of the operational units alone amounted to more than sixtysix-thousand armed fighters.

### *Operations for the Liberation of Macedonia*

The Yugoslav peoples' last, lengthy battles for the final liberation of Yugoslavia began in the middle of 1944. Operations for the liberation of Macedonia were fought within the scope of these actions.

About mid-October 1944 the last main National Liberation Army and Yugoslav Partisan Detachment operations for the liberation of the principal towns of Macedonia began. The territory surrounding the towns had by this time already been liberated.

Units of the Sixteenth Corps and the Bregalnitsa-Strumitsa Corps, as well as of the Bulgarian First and Fourth Armies, took part in the actions for the liberation of eastern and north-eastern Macedonia. Strumitsa was thus liberated on 5th November, Shtip on 8th November and Kumanovo on 11th November 1944. Although units of the Bulgarian Fourth Army participated in these actions the attitude of their officers and N.C.O's. damaged the friendly relations that had existed.

Units of the Fifteenth Corps were involved in the liberation of Pelagonia and the Lake District. They liberated Prilep on 2nd November, Bitola on 4th November, Resen on 5th November and Ohrid on 8th November 1944.

The Germans devoted particular attention to Veles, which was an important cross-roads. The attack on Veles involved the Forty-second National Liberation Division, a section of the Fiftieth National Liberation Division (after the liberation of Shtip) and a section of the Forty-first National Liberation Division, once it had completed the clearance of the Vardar Valley. After two days of fighting Veles (now Titov Veles) was liberated on 9th November 1944.

Skopje was defended by units of the German Twenty-second Grenade Division (the Forty-seventh and the Sixty-fifth Regiments) and sections of the Eleventh Airborne Division as well as other groups from various detachments. Also the German Angermiller Fortress Brigade was stationed at the entrance to the Kachanik Gorge. The strength of the German units in Skopje was estimated at more than a division.

The Forty-second and Fiftieth National Liberation Divisions and the Sixteenth Macedonian Brigade led the battle for Skopje and city was liberated on 13th November 1944.

After the liberation of Skopje one division, of four brigades, from the Sixteenth Corps prolonged the fighting in the direction of Tetovo while another division, of three brigades, from the same Corps continued the fighting towards Kachanik.

The German units were in an extremely difficult position during the operations for the liberation of Macedonia. Because of their strength, however, they succeeded in withdrawing in an organised fashion towards the northern regions of Yugoslavia. The actions in Macedonia held up their withdrawal for two weeks and the units suffered keenly-felt losses of both men and materials: the Eleventh Airborne Division and the Twenty-second Grenade Divi-

sion lost about ten per cent of their men and fifteen per cent of their equipment.

The leadership and the units of the liberation war in Macedonia and the Party field organisations maintained a close collaboration with the resistance movement in Kosovo and Metohiya throughout the National War of Liberation. This collaboration took many forms, from Party contacts to the formation of joint units and involvement in joint actions on the part of other units in the struggle against occupier.

After the liberation of Macedonia operational needs compelled units of the Kumanovo and the Forty-second National Liberation Divisions to continue their operations and to transfer their activities to Kosovo and Metohiya.

The revolutionary fighting spirit of the people found its own particular expression in the final liberation of Macedonia. As well as participating in the more general activities of supplying provisions, receiving the sick and wounded, and manning the reconnaissance and courier services, under the direction of the National Liberation Committees and military and territorial commands, the entire people, with weapons captured from the armies of occupation, themselves played a direct part in the actions. This was particularly evident during the liberation of the towns.

The liberation of Macedonia created new suppositions concerning its free and all-round development as an equal member of the community of the Yugoslav peoples. However, there also appeared certain problems which stemmed from the ravaged state of the country. A hundred and sixty-eight major road bridges with a total length of 4,132 metres had been destroyed. Five hundred kilometres of railway track, ninety-seven per cent of railway bridges, ninety per cent of the stations and the entire locomotive stock had also been destroyed and sleepers and lines torn up. To this should be added the large number of villages burned down, the amount of livestock destroyed and the general destruction of agriculture.

On the liberation of Macedonia organisational forms were finally given to the National Liberation Front and the Women's Anti-fascist Organisation with the aim of their continuing to play a major rôle during the period of the reconstruction of the country, as they had during the Revolution itself. Thus the first Countrywide Conference of the National Liberation Front took place in Skopje on 26th November 1944 and a Supreme Committee was elected. The first Conference of the Women's Anti-fascist Organisation was held and its Supreme Committee elected on 15th December 1944. On 8th January 1945 the Second Macedonian National Liberation Youth League Congress was held. This was a particularly powerful occasion, being attended by over a thousand delegates.

## LIBERATION OF YUGOSLAVIA

### *Overall Political Situation at the End of 1944*

In 1944 the anti-Hitler coalition was on the offensive and achieved marked success on all fronts. The army of the Third Reich was on the retreat and was being pressed back within the frontiers of Germany.

On the western front, after the landing of Anglo-American troops in Normandy, the liberation of France and Belgium meant that the most important Channel ports were now in Allied hands. In an attempt to retrieve the situation on the western front the Germans undertook the well-known Ardennes Counter-offensive, at the end of December 1944, which, although initially successful, was defeated. In Italy the Allied armies broke through the German Gothic Line of defence and penetrated northern Italy.

On the eastern front the Red Army was continually on the offensive. Finland and Bulgaria, Hitler's allies, were defeated and in Romania the people had already risen in revolt. In 1944 the Red Army liberated the territories of the Soviet Union and, together with local revolutionary forces, expelled the Germans from Poland and Czechoslovakia. The revolutionary Fatherland Front government was installed in Bulgaria.

The Red Army, together with the revolutionary forces of the peoples of eastern Europe, continued the battle for Hungary and for the final destruction of Nazi Germany.

In the Far East heavy fighting was taking place between American and Japanese forces.

In 1944 the territory of Yugoslavia was one vast front. Its general characteristic was that the German and Quisling forces held the more important towns and cities and were endeavouring to establish a front in the classical sense in Yugoslavia which would link the eastern front with that in Italy. The disposition of the German troops in Yugoslavia with the exception of the Srem Front, was designed to hold particular points and also the communication routes. In Montenegro, Herzegovina, western Serbia and Bosnia their aim was to safeguard the withdrawal of the German E Army Group from Macedonia and Albania. In Croatia, Slovenia and the north-western regions of Bosnia they aimed to protect the rearward of the German Eastern Front, which had to a certain extent expanded into Yugoslav territory, and, at the same time, to safeguard operations in Italy. In Dalmatia their basic aim was to obstruct any landing of Allied troops on the Dalmatian coast. As a result of the lengthy actions of 1944 Macedonia, part of Serbia, including

Belgrade (on 20th October 1944), the Dalmatian islands and the Dalmatian mainland were liberated.

The Germans undertook a large number of offensive actions in Slovenia in order to safeguard communications for the withdrawal of their forces from the Srem Front, from the Drava and from Italy.

### *General Offensive for the Liberation of Yugoslavia*

The winter of 1944/45, particularly the period from December to March, was significant in the organisational growth of the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments. The First, Second and Third Armies were formed at this time from units of the National Liberation Army and the Yugoslav Partisan Detachments. Throughout the winter these armies and certain independent corps carried out a large number of offensive operations.

In Macedonia that winter the Fifteenth Corps, commanded by Alekso Demnjevski, was formed from two divisions (the Forty-second and the Forty-eight). It contained over twenty thousand fighters armed largely with weapons received as Soviet aid. The Corps was despatched to the Srem Front where it became part of the First Army of the Yugoslav National Liberation Army.

In March 1945 the left wing of the Army (the Third Ukrainian Front) made its way from Hungary to the River Drava.

On 1st March 1945 the National Liberation Army was renamed the Yugoslav Army. It was then disposed in three basic groups: the northern group, consisting of the Third Army at the River Drava, the First Army on the Srem Front and two corps (the Sixth and the Tenth) to the rear of the German Front on the Drava and at Srem; the central group of the Second Army in eastern Bosnia and the Sarajevo Operational Group (of three corps); and the southern group of the Fourth Army in northern Dalmatia, operating towards the Croatian littoral and Trieste, and three corps (the Fourth, Seventh and Ninth) active in the rear of this Front.

At the outset of the Yugoslav Army's offensive the German forces consisted of the E and G Groups with thirteen German, two Cossack and fourteen Ustashi Quisling divisions, nine fighter groups and brigades, a Chetnik division and numerous police, naval and coastal units.

The Yugoslav Army, with the support of the entire people, began its offensive in mid-March 1945. The offensive took place in several stages, each one creating conditions increasingly favourable to the ultimate liberation of Yugoslavia. The actions involved

were numerous and, in terms both of their hard nature and significance, difficult to distinguish one from the other. In the operations of the northern group, however, the crossing of the River Drava by the Third Army and the First Army's break-through on the Srem Front occupied a special place. Similarly, in the case of the central group, the actions around Sarajevo and the Second Army's penetration through Bosnia and, in the case of the southern group, the battles of the famed Trieste Operation were particularly outstanding.

Germany capitulated on 9th May 1945. Nevertheless the German commanders on Yugoslav territory continued fighting until 15th May, when those involved in the military actions on the north-western frontiers of Yugoslavia were forced to capitulate.

For four years the National Liberation Army of the Yugoslav peoples maintained a front on which, in the final operations, they had an army of more than eight hundred thousand. At different periods extremely large numbers of German troops were engaged on the Yugoslav Front – at all times more than twenty divisions. There were also more than fifteen Italian divisions until 1943, more than eight divisions from the Bulgarian Kingdom until 9th September 1944, and many more besides. These figures are a measure of the worthy contribution made by the peoples of Yugoslavia to the overall victory over the Fascist invaders.

In the four years of the war from 1941 to 1945 the number of victims, in terms of those of the Yugoslav people who were killed, amounted to a total of about one million and seven hundred thousand, of whom three hundred and five thousand were fighting members of National Liberation Army units.

More than eight hundred and twenty thousand houses, almost all the road and railway bridges, railway lines and marshalling yards in Yugoslavia were destroyed by the Fascist occupiers. Thus the country was liberated but had meanwhile been ravaged by four years of fighting.

In the final operations for the liberation of Yugoslavia Yugoslav Army units captured a total of 221,257 Fascist troops, of whom 57,150 were Italian, 27,388 Austrian and 26,611 Vlasovite Russians. They also captured large quantities of arms, munitions and other military equipment.

The brotherhood and equality of the peoples of Yugoslavia, as well as the national affirmation of the Macedonian and Montenegrin peoples, whose nationality had not been recognised in pre-war Yugoslavia, were gains of particular importance achieved as a result of the four year struggle.

In addition to its strategic and operational significance the universal struggle of the Yugoslav peoples was important politically. Their struggle had powerful reverberations among all the

subject peoples of Europe and gave them a fresh impetus in their own resistance to the occupiers.

The successful culmination of the Yugoslav people's revolution enabled Yugoslavia to develop as a socialist state and, in the post-war period, to heal its war wounds relatively quickly, renewing itself and achieving notable results in terms of its economic and socialist growth.

## EDUCATION, CULTURE AND ART DURING THE NATIONAL LIBERATION WAR

The years-long subjugation of the Macedonian people had made a normal growth of their national culture impossible. New masters – the Bulgarian and Italian occupiers – pursued the policy of their predecessors: setting up Bulgarian or Italian schools, they denied the Macedonian language and denied or subsumed the culture of the Macedonian people to their own. Thus, at their final liberation, the Macedonian people had neither alphabet nor grammar and had no developed literary language of their own. While waging a war for their national and social liberation the Macedonian people were at the same time fighting for the affirmation of their own language and culture.

Thus the development of the language and of culture and art continued throughout the course of the National War of Liberation and the Revolution.

From 1941 to 1945, during the National Liberation War, correspondence between Party organisations, military units and Headquarters, the organs of popular rule and other, military organs was conducted in Macedonian. The field of educational and cultural activities were of extreme importance to the Party organisations, military Headquarters and the organs of popular rule. It was from the attitude of these bodies that the directions issued by the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters on 22nd July 1942 originated. According to these directions the Commissars were made responsible for delivering and organising special lectures in the cultural field – on literature, geography and history, etc. – with a particular emphasis on the study of the history of the Macedonian people, as well as the history of the other Yugoslav peoples. In line with this directive the Commissars, in addition to their political work in the units and in the field, were allotted the delicate and responsible task of acting as educational and cultural organisers and, in many cases, being themselves the only cultural and educational workers.



That the problems of culture and education should be solved more effectively an administrative officer in charge of education (schooling) and one in charge of religious affairs were appointed at the Supreme Headquarters. These were in addition to the sections of the Central Committee of the Macedonian Communist Party and the Supreme Headquarters responsible for agitation and propaganda.

The administrative officer in charge of religious affairs propounded the aims of the National War of Liberation among the clergy and believers. He was influential in the adoption of the Macedonian language, rather than Bulgarian, Italian or Serbian, in the churches.

In addition to its resolution on the adoption of Macedonian as the official language, the First Session of A. S. N. O. M. made the following statement concerning questions of education: "The problem of education is in itself a difficult task. The preparation of elementary textbooks for our schools, in which Macedonian will be taught, and for adult literacy courses, poses the initial question of work on a grammar and dictionary so that Macedonian may be taught and written and become the official language of our entire administration. It is therefore necessary that a commission which will be responsible for the precise definition of our language be appointed."

### *Schooling and Education*

In 1943, on the creation of a liberated territory in western Macedonia, the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters established the first schools in which the teaching was conducted in Macedonian. These were established, through the administrative officer in charge of schooling, in the villages of Belchishta, Ozdoleni, Slatino, Izdeglavje, Slivovo, Podvis, Gari, Lazaropolé and Osoy and in the town of Debar. These were over and above the educational activities undertaken by the commissars and by the agitation and propaganda sections of the detachments, military units and in the field.

Subsequently special military courses on minelaying, on handling mortars and large guns and on familiarisation with military techniques were established. The schools which provided these courses served to raise the educational standard of the soldiers as well as giving specific military training.

After its first session the Praesidium of A. S. N. O. M. undertook responsibility for developing culture and education. Thus, even before Macedonia had been liberated, an extensive network of schools of different sorts and at different levels was organised.

A resolution was later passed decreeing that elementary education should last for seven years and secondary education for five. The possibility of establishing certain institutes was also examined.

In the final operations for the liberation of Macedonia the Praesidium and the Commissariats of A.S.N.O.M. took the first steps towards the opening of Gymnasiums (Grammar Schools) in Skopje, Bitola, Shtip, Kumanovo, Prilep, Strumitsa, Tetovo, Veles and Ohrid.

On 1st December 1944 the Praesidium of A. S. N. O. M. passed a resolution to establish a music academy, art and teachers' training schools and other specialised secondary schools in Skopje.

The Supreme Headquarters, the military units and the partisan detachments continued their educational activities and an artillery school and a school for supply services officers were established in the village of Lisets in the Veles district. On the liberation of Skopje a special officers' training school for the further education of commanding personnel was set up there.

### *Press and Literature*

Newspapers, bulletins, news broadcasts on the radio and other media employing the Macedonian language occupied a special place in the dissemination of education and culture among the people. Virtually all the Party organisations, military units and partisan detachments issued their own newspapers or bulletins.

Among the numerous news-sheets issued by Party organisations or military units were "Дедо Иван" (Grandfather Ivan) in Kumanovo, the Bulletin of the Supreme Headquarters, the "Нова Македонија" (New Macedonia), "Млад борец" (Young Fighter) and "Македонија" (Macedonia) newspapers and the periodical "Илинденски пат" (The Way of Ilinden).

Through their works poets and prose writers contributed greatly to the formation of a base for the development of the Macedonian literary language and for the growth of Macedonian culture. The poets and prose writers from the inter-war period, such as Kocho Ratsin, Kolé Nedelkovski and Venko Markovski, and the dramatists Vasil Ilyoski, Anton Panov and Risto Krlé were joined by other, new names, such as Atso Shopov, Slavko Yanevski, Mitê Bogoevski and Atso Karamanov, which appeared on the Macedonian literary scene during the war period. The National Liberation War gave to Macedonian literature a notable variety of themes. While continuing the tradition of the national romantic poetry of the nineteenth century, the Macedonian poets introduced into it a wholly new subject-matter. They presented the poetry and war-torn history of the Macedonian people, inspired largely, on

the one hand, by the greatness of the Ilinden Uprising and, on the other, by the everyday struggles of the people. The poetry written during the National War of Liberation gave expression to the struggle and the heroism of the freedom fighters and their implacable hatred of the enemy occupiers.

The period of the National War of Liberation was a pre-condition which determined the future free and creative development of Macedonian literature. The first post-war generation of Macedonian poets and prose writers emerged during this period.

### *Theatre*

Various forms of theatre activity were already present in the early days of the National War of Liberation and the Revolution as an integral part of the general educational and cultural improvement of those engaged in the fighting and of the people at large. One particular aspect of this activity was the work of the partisan detachments among the people, beginning with the earliest meetings which were accompanied by programmes of cultural entertainment, including song, recitations and one-act plays and continuing through to the first proper theatre productions.

In addition to the cultural entertainment which accompanied these meetings numerous programmes involving war songs, folk songs, recitations, sketches, one act plays and lighter dramatic works were staged in the liberated and semi-liberated territories in the years 1943 and 1944.

In the summer of 1944 the Kocho Ratsin Cultural and Educational Group was founded in western Macedonia. At the same time divisional choirs, folk and drama groups and bands or orchestras were formed in all the divisions. Among the divisional choirs the choir of the Fiftieth National Liberation Division was outstanding.

Early in the autumn of 1944 the Kocho Ratsin Cultural and Educational Group established a theatre group which gave performances in the mosque in the village of Gorno Vranovtsi.

After the liberation of Skopje, in November 1944, a number of actors from the units and detachments joined the Kocho Ratsin Group and began to create a professional Macedonian national theatre with drama and opera – and later ballet – sections.

### *Art*

There had been a lengthy tradition of art in Macedonia. Starting from the cultural monuments of the Middle Ages, mostly in

the form of church buildings and frescoes, and through the work of the iconographers and wood-carvers this tradition found its expression in the twentieth century in a generation of modern painters.

The extremely complex situation during the Balkan and First World Wars had left a particular stamp on the development of art in Macedonia. Painters developed under the various influences of Belgrade, Sofia or Athens. While under these three influences Macedonian painters yet endeavoured to retain in their works characteristics inherited from their forebears and those which emanated from their own environment and from their own people.

At the outset of the National War of Liberation and the Revolution the well-known names in Macedonian art were: Lazar Lichenovski, Nikola Martinovski, Vangel Kodzhoman, Tomo Vladimirski, Vasilie Popovich-Tsitso, Kiro Karadzha, Lyuben Belogaski, Borko Lazeski and Dimche Todorovski. During the war the majority of them joined the ranks of the National Liberation Army or the Partisan Detachments. The possibility of pursuing their work as artists in wartime was distinctly limited yet some of them have left behind works from this period. Notable among the works of this sort are the caricatures of Vasilie Popovich-Tsitso.

In the period of the war and the revolution from 1943 to 1944 the painter Branko Shotra, who had been born in Stolats, in Herzegovina, was serving in the Macedonian military units. Shotra's operational duties prevented him from engaging in his art but it was he who designed the seal of the Macedonian Supreme Headquarters (now in the Museum of History in Skopje). He also managed to produce a number of vignettes and sketches and in the post-war period he produced numerous prints on subjects taken from the National War of Liberation.

The war period provided a particular impetus to the swift and tumultuous development of art after the liberation and directed it towards subjects arising out of the war itself and the revolution.

### *Music*

Musical activity was both rich and varied during the National War of Liberation and the Revolution. A large number of young musicians who had begun to make their way in the inter-war period, such as Panché Peshev (who was killed in action at Goten, near Radovish, on 5th June 1944), Petre Bogdanov-Kochko and Todor Skalovski, continued their musical activity, directing it towards the people's struggle, and were themselves numbered in

the ranks of the partisan detachments, the military units or the organs of popular rule.

Until mid-1943 creative musical activity in the ranks of the partisan detachments was not particularly significant and the musical life that was associated with meetings and cultural performances and entertainments was based on the reproduction of folk music. In the course of the National War of Liberation the rallying force of music was, however, highly valued. Songs upheld a belief in the eventual victory over the fascist masters. It was at this time that the first partisan songs made their appearance. Thus, during the war and the revolution, many old folk or revolutionary songs were adapted and new ones appeared. Particularly popular at this time were: "Денес над Македонија" (Over Macedonia Today), "А што ми е мило партизанка да бидам" (How Good It Is To Be a Partisan), "Миле Поп Јорданов" (Milé Pop Yordanov), "А бре Македонче" (Oh, Young Macedonian), "Пушка пукна" (A Gun Fired), "Одамна лежам" (Long Have I Lain) and "Од Македонија глас се чуе" (A Voice is Heard from Macedonia). Some of the songs which appeared then had direct associations with the Ilinden Uprising.

It is worth noting that certain melodies from the Soviet Union were adapted to suit the situation in Macedonia. Such was the case with "Во борба, македонски народе" (Into Battle, People of Macedonia), which was sung to the tune of the March of the Soviet Air Force.

During the war and the revolution a number of original works were composed. Among them were the very fine partisan song, "Ко челик сме ние" (We Are As Steel), composed by Panché Peshev with words by Atso Shopov; Todor Skalovski's Macedonian Pioneers' March, the March of the Youth of Macedonia and "Во борба" (Into Battle), with words by Kolé Chashulé; and Petar Bogdanov's March of the First Macedonian Brigade. Todor Skalovski also arranged "Денес над Македонија" (Over Macedonia Today) and "Во борба, македонски народе" (Into Battle, People of Macedonia) for choral singing.

In addition to the choirs, bands and orchestras in the brigades the Supreme Headquarters Male Voice Choir was formed in Vranovtsi in October 1944. After the war this choir became the Skopje Army Choir.

In October 1944 in the village of Gorno Vranovtsi post-war Macedonian scholarship, culture and art were established. This made it possible immediately after the liberation of Macedonia, while the central and northern parts of Yugoslavia were still at war, for cultural and scientific life to start up in Skopje. For the first time in the history of their people, Macedonian artists, poets and prose writers and scholars were able to work in freedom.